

DEAD MEN'S SHOES

VANCE MAR



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SHOES

or

The One Hundred Per Cent
Inheritance Tax

By VAL DE MAR ✓

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He 12.

Truth is that basic law which governs the functioning of all other laws throughout eternity.

And one of these laws decrees that a price must be paid for everything we obtain, whether good or evil—cling to greed and accept evil; renounce greed and receive good.

*Why should the soil know what hand
casts the seed?*

If the soil is good, the conditions propitious and the seed sound, it will germinate, grow, blossom and bear fruit.

We are all prone to ask the old question: "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" and to judge the work by the instrumentality of its making.

Therefore, let the leaven of truth and justice in these lines come to you in its own strength and without sponsorship.

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The Telepsychophone

The Iconoclast has been very fortunate to have such a wonderful instrument—the only one in existence—placed at his service.

The reference is made to the Universal Wireless Tele-psychic-phone.

The local instrument performs all the work of receiving and transmitting. Anything spoken into the instrument may be heard by anyone giving attention, irrespective of the distance. Anything spoken, within the distance that the instrument has been set for, is picked up by the wireless feelers, passed through the micro-psycho attachment, which, should several persons speak at the same time, automatically selects the speech that is most pertinent and eliminates any sound not pertinent to the subject under discussion.

Thus the speaker at the instrument may be heard by anyone giving attention, in any part of the country. Anyone wishing to reply may do so by simply speaking out aloud, wherever he may be. The spoken word, traversing the air, is picked up by the wireless feelers, passed through the micro-psycho attachment for elimination and selection, reconstructed into sounds, flashed on the phonetic sounding board, which instantaneously retransmits it so that all those giving attention may hear.

Thus the whole country is converted into one gigantic auditorium.

Owing to the inability to make an absolutely accurate adjustment of this delicate instrument, intruding voices, of persons who are not giving attention, nor taking part in the discussion, will sometimes be audible; but their utterances are always, in a greater or less degree, germane to the subject.

It will be noticed that the instrument sometimes cuts into the middle of a speech or lecture, and leaves off as abruptly, contingent upon its relevance to the subject that the psycho-phone has been set for.

Dead Men's Shoes

or

The One-Hundred Per Cent Inheritance Tax

THE PRO AND CON OF IT

The psychophone being set for subject: "The Economic Problem"; and distance: The United States—the Iconoclast presses a button, sending the electrical current humming and vibrating through the instrument. Brrrrr-rrrr-rrr-rr-r-r-r-r

INTRUSIVE VOICE. (*)

Brrr-rr-rr-r-r

"When all the temple is prepared within,

"Why nods the drowsy worshipper outside?"

Brrr-rr-rr-r-r

"Open then the door:

"You know how little while we have to stay,

"And, once departed, may return no more."

THE ICONOCLAST.

Fellow citizens! Have you ever heard of "dead men's shoes"?

You may answer: "Dead men wear no shoes."

And yet, our country, as well as every other country, is full of them. Some are very large, strong and

(*) Omar Khayyam.

heavy, and incumber and obstruct the highways and byways; making progress very difficult, very laborious, and almost impossible for the feet of the majority of the living.

While many of these "dead men's shoes" are worth thousands and some are worth many millions of dollars, a large multitude of the living, struggling along these highways and byways, are barefoot, many are cut and bleeding and some perish by the way. "Shoes" everywhere, all shapes and sizes, some ugly and some beautiful; but all denoting comfort, all afford protection against the rough road, and all are capable of safeguarding feet against bruises and cuts.

Perhaps the question arises in your mind: "Why are the living going barefoot, bruising and cutting their feet, when so many dead men's shoes are about?"

Because the "dead men's shoes" have claimants. Some of the "shoes" have a number of them. And they use these large "shoes" as a sort of improvised houseboat: tucking themselves snugly inside, while they employ some of the barefoot-fellows to drag them along the highway.

The larger and heavier the "shoes" and the greater the number of barefoot-fellows employed in their manipulation, the more important do the occupants consider themselves, and the more indispensable do they imagine the service they render society in permitting the barefoot-fellows to take care of them.

Sometimes we find a very large, heavy pair that makes us think the dead man must have been of gigan-

tic proportions—and perhaps he was—and we would have experienced the same feeling that overcomes us when contemplating the Sphinx or the Pyramids, if it were not for the ludicrous fact that they are occupied—yes, that's the word, occupied—by a little pigmy. No, he could not wear them. He crawls into, and uses, one little corner and makes himself very comfortable there.

But, should anyone attempt to trespass upon any part of his unoccupied domain, beware, the little fellow has a very loud voice and plenty of barefoot retainers, ready to do his bidding, to repulse and expel the invaders.

Because some of these "shoes" are of huge dimensions does not always prove that the original owner was a very large man; for the majority of the barefoot-fellows are very good "shoemakers" and, to avoid starvation, accept employment from the "shoes" occupants. Many of the barefoot-fellows are continually working on these old "shoes"—keeping them in trim, stretching, mending and even enlarging them.

You may wonder why they do not make "shoes" for their own feet, since they are such good "shoemakers"?

But they have no material.

Whenever a piece of "leather" is found in the highway, all the old "shoes" in the neighborhood hurry, scrambling, to see who can cover it, and it generally goes to the heaviest pair.

Bare feet—cut and bleeding—what show have they? They only get stepped on, mashed and kicked about.

So, the best they can do is to hop aboard a large, heavy pair and assist the owner in the fray.

Sometimes, in the contention for these pieces of "leather", bitter fights ensue; when it becomes very important for the barefoot-fellows to choose the right party to assist. Woe betide him who picks the loser. He shall soon find himself kicked out into a cold world, where his only hope will be to prostrate himself before the victor and serve him by helping to gather in the pieces of the "shoes" of the defeated opponent.

During these bitter fights for stray pieces of "leather" and "shoe" material, no consideration is given to anything else. Religion is thrown overboard, ethical rules are forgotten, pity, compassion and the cause of humanity have no place here; even the laws are violated and crimes committed to obtain the much coveted material.

Many different sizes of "shoes" may be involved in the mêlée; the smaller and lightly constructed ones being soon torn to pieces, their occupants stripped and turned out among the barefoot ones, being now more helpless than they. Women and children, previously ensconced in neat little "shoes", are turned out on the highway, barefoot; while the remnants are gathered up—being highly valuable for the enlargement of the heavy, victorious pair.

The excitement is great during these contests, the hordes of barefoot retainers being marshalled by their respective "shoe-proprietors" and everyone trying, with all the means at his disposal, to accomplish the ruin of his opponents. As the battle rages, women and children weep, men kill one another and commit suicide—nothing matters—only one thing is of importance: to secure and gather in "shoe" material.

The occupants of the large and heavy "shoes" employ an army of barefoot retainers; each one having his specially assigned duty, for the benefit and welfare of the "shoes". In return for this service they are kept from dying of starvation, and the most efficient ones are doled out a little material, enabling them, ultimately, to fashion a tiny pair of "shoes" of their own.

Sometimes this army of barefoot-fellows organize, for mutual strength and protection. Wearying of being kept on a "shoe-string", they demand that a little material be handed out to them—something more out of the abundance they daily and monthly augment to the heavy "shoes"—at least enough to make a light pair of "sandals", to save their "soles". A satisfactory compromise is generally effected whereby they may continue to improve and strengthen the heavy old "shoes".

But it never seems to occur to the barefoot-fellows that they could do very well without the occupants of these "dead men's shoes".

That the material which nature has produced, and which they, themselves, have assembled to make all

these heavy old "shoes", is sufficient to give each and every one of the barefoot-fellows a very serviceable pair of "shoes".

That if some agreement could be arrived at to change this system of scramble and fight for materials—which makes force master, which gives victory and success and, consequently, the material to the strong and heavy pair of "shoes" that is able to trample all the others underfoot—the "shoe" material, in place of being appropriated and made into a few heavy pairs, entirely too large for the occupants to wear, would be obtainable by all the barefoot-fellows, with less effort than they are exerting now.

The large, heavy pairs which, in place of being used as "shoes", have been turned into houseboats where the occupants loll, would be cut up and the material used for the benefit of all.

You may wonder how the present occupants of these "dead men's shoes" came into possession of them. Let us trace the history of one pair.

The name of the designer of this pair was John de Roughshod. He had a nose singularly keen for "shoe" material; his scent being so highly developed that hardly a piece of "leather" escaped detection and the planting of his "shoes" upon it, on the highway which he chose to travel. Consequently, with the assistance of a large army of barefoot retainers, his "shoes" grew to an enormous size. They even passed the houseboat classification and developed into a monstrous juggernaut. The owner, while not despising

any odd piece of "leather," had a specially keen scent for a certain kind which abounded along that particular highway. As a natural result he outdistanced all competitors, and since his "shoes" had grown to such enormous size, it was safest to give them a wide berth and not dispute his right to plant them upon any choice bit of "shoe" material that took his fancy.

Those who did not observe this simple rule paid dearly for their folly. Many a trim pair of "shoes" were stamped to pieces and their foolish occupants turned out upon the highway, barefoot, cursing and swearing, impotently. But that is part of the game, and one cannot help admiring the old codger for his shrewdness and audacity.

At last, realizing that his "shoe-building" days were numbered, he sent for his lawyer, in order to make his will.

The lawyer, being a good old soul, suggested that now, since he had demonstrated to the world what a clever and capable "shoe-builder" he was, he should cut up the old "shoes" into small pieces and scatter them in such manner that all the barefoot-fellows would each receive a tiny piece.

"What!" fairly yelled John de Roughshod, stung to the quick, "do you realize the enormity of your suggestion?"

"Do you know that I began my career as a barefoot-fellow—even as one of these? That I worked my way up through trials and self-abnegation? That I set before me a great goal, and through economy and

hard labor, I have achieved it? That, when other young men were on pleasure bent, I studied and planned—I burned the midnight oil—I was ambitious—I saw a world of ‘shoe’ material to conquer and subdue? Yea, I may say, with the great Cæsar: ‘Veni, Vidi, Vici.’

“Go out into the marts and whisper my name—John de Roughshod—behold, it is as magic—it is like oil upon the troubled waters. The wind bloweth where it listeth, but at the sound of my voice there is calm.

“Go out upon the highways and watch the numerous picayune ‘shoes’ gathering for a fray—listen to the noise and clamor—but let the herald go forth and announce the approach of John de Roughshod’s heavy pair of ‘shoes’ and you shall see them scatter, like chaff before the wind, to the four corners of the earth.

“Let these barefoot-fellows, even as King Nebuchadnezzar, herd with the beasts of the field and eat grass, and the mighty in Europe drink one another’s blood until they are sated, but I will have ‘leather’, oily ‘leather’ and ‘shoes’.

“You, son of a woman! Can not you realize how I have toiled, schemed and built? I have enough for my maintenance, if I lived an eternity—it’s the result of a most strenuous life. And you, with one stroke of the pen, wish to render nugatory my life work—that which I have dedicated my life to build up—that which I have made them pay me in sweat, tears, and blood—that which, thanks to my constructive genius, has

grown until it is a giant, you wish to stab through with your little goose-quill pen.

"Scatter among these barefoot rascallions, indeed! It's a pity I have to die. But you must help, and I shall so circumscribe these massive 'shoes' of mine that when I am no more—yes, thousands of years hence—so long as men travel on these highways—they shall still continue to be the greatest 'shoes' extant. Feared and revered, men shall look upon them and, although controlled by other hands, know them for what they are, the handiwork of the great John de Roughshod.

"And my name shall live in my children and children's children so long as 'shoes' and highways meet—and they shall never be in danger of being merged with these barefoot-fellows—for the name is my children's and the 'shoes' go with the name and the name with the 'shoes', and they shall be one; and the barefoot-fellows shall labor to keep them one, forever and forever."

Upon the death of John de Roughshod his children claimed and took possession of his massive "shoes". This being according to law and custom of society, which hold that it would not be fair to require the children of such a mighty man to earn their own living.

It is reported that a certain multi-millionaire once made the sage remark: "It is a disgrace for a man to die with his 'shoes' on."

But is it not a far greater disgrace for a person to pull the "shoes" off from the dead man's feet in order to put them on his own?

It calls for knowledge, skill, labor and material to make a pair of "shoes", and, surely, it is only just to let the maker wear them so long as he is able. But what moral right have his children to them? Is it just and fair that these "shoes", fashioned out of material which nature has provided for the use of all, should be reserved for the benefit of a few, who did not even contribute to their making, while thousands upon thousands must go barefoot because the material is bound up in these heavy "shoes"?

The only thing that can be said in justification of this system is that it is a simple and primitive rule from which society has not, as yet, been able to break away. And, also, that this system provides profit and emolument to the numerous members of the legal fraternity. First: in aiding and advising the different claimants in what they call their rights—although they have done nothing to acquire any rights—and, secondly: in the prolific legal business that grows out of this pernicious system of keeping these heavy "shoes" intact.

So far as known, no one has ever been born with shoes on his feet; but a large number of individuals are brought up and educated with a view to, and for the sole purpose of, stepping into a pair as soon as the present wearer dies.

That is all they came into the world for, and it is all they intend to do; their living is provided for, to the detriment of millions of their fellow men. It is wrong to blame them, for when society is foolish enough to continue such a system, it is their privilege

to dedicate their lives to idleness and pleasure, while the balance of society labors to maintain them.

INTRUSIVE VOICE:

Hello!

Who is it?

Who?

"The Tax Collector!"

Well, I can't spare the money. Come around after I am dead—never mind the bill—just pick up the leavings. You may brrr-rr-r-

VOICE.

But, Sir! It is their inalienable right—and has been from time immemorial—to inherit and receive the estate and goods of their parents. No doubt, the cave-man handed down his club, battle-axe and drinking horn to his favorite son.

To change this time-honored custom would be worse than socialistic, it would be anarchistic, and disrupt the very foundation of organized society.

THE ICONOCLAST.

It is not a right, but a wrong which has been perpetuated and handed down from generation to generation, and has a tendency to make drones out of a part of society while it places an undue handicap against the rest. It may have served quite well in the caveman's time, but it is certainly out of date in our present day civilization.

Disrupting organized society is precisely what the present system is doing by dividing it into distinct

classes—each class having opposing interests, which they can advance only at the expense of every other class. Thus we have continual strife and class wars, not only between the different classes, but each individual class is divided into smaller factions that are constantly striking, blindly, at one another.

In place of considering the problem as a whole and adjusting matters with fairness to all parties, the policy of every nation, every class, every faction, and every man, is to get the best of every-one-else—to beat them to it by law, trick or force—to hold down as much as possible, whether able to use it or not, to the exclusion of everybody else. A great many of the present generation are forced to starvation, poverty and want, in order to permit a select few—blindly selected, at that—to provide liberally for unborn generations.

The abolition of these “dead men’s shoes,” in place of disrupting organized society, would do away with classes and class wars and unite society into a homogeneous whole. It would give every man a fair start and place the question of success, or failure, squarely upon his own shoulders.

We all came naked into this world: so, why should we not start even?

VOICE.

But that is impossible, in very nature of things, for the individuals differ in their mental as well as in their physical capacities. And the strong and capable

would, right from the start, outstrip the weak and incapable.

THE ICONOCLAST.

Granted!

And, by the same token, is not nature's handicap enough, without erecting artificial ones?

The object is not to provide and maintain everyone in "shoes", but, by breaking up and disposing of these valuable old "shoes"—the dead man having no further use for them—, make "shoe" material so abundant that every one, making an honest effort, shall not go shoeless, nor his wife, nor his children.

VOICE.

It is senseless to talk about the erection of artificial handicaps or barriers against anyone, for these do not exist.

We are all free men and equal and have the right to study, labor and advance ourselves, intellectually as well as in material ways; the very constitution guarantees us this blessed boon.

Numerous examples could be cited of men who began with nothing and yet accumulated large fortunes.

THE ICONOCLAST.

The artificial handicap consists in the fact that one man must start, to-day, with two empty hands and compete with a man who had *someone else start for him* one or two, perhaps many, generations ago.

Thus the wealth and resources of the country—be it land, city property, railways, factories, etc.—are tied up in “shoes” of various sizes and values.

When the possessor feels that he is about to slip out of his “shoes”, he calls in a lawyer to assist him in securely fastening down these precious old “shoes”, so that should his children be fools or incapable of taking care of themselves—their proper training having been neglected—they may yet live in luxury, no matter how useless they are to themselves or to society.

This is the basis of aristocracy and snobbish class feeling, and is foreign to true democracy, because such grading of society is not founded upon deserved merit.

But no matter how poverty stricken, we must not make the mistake of thinking we do not inherit anything, for every man and woman living inherits something.

We either fall heir to resources, or we fall heir to the necessity of, through our labor, maintaining the arbitrary value of these resources.

If one man inherits property and resources which, through our system of reserving for private benefit—while speculating upon the necessity of others to pay toll for the use of it—, has gained a fictitious valuation of millions, others—perhaps thousands to offset the one—inherit the obligation, the necessity, to pay toll or interest, and thereby maintain this arbitrary valuation.

This, while not generally recognized, is, nevertheless, a concrete fact.

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r- Say, Percy! Did you hear what that fellow said? Must be a kink in his logic, somewhere.

My parents transmitted and endowed me with all their peculiar traits and characteristics, among which was a healthy appetite.

But what is the good of it, if I am not permitted to receive the wherewithal they also provided and endowed me with for its gratification?

The trouble is: there are so many people in this world whose views do not co-incide with our own. And, of course, they brrrr-rrr-r-r-r

VOICE.

I think my case will evince the fallacy of the reasoning that the possession of wealth is conducive to idleness or detrimental to the welfare of society.

I hold that accumulated wealth, in place of being a menace, is distinctly beneficial to society as a whole, since it affords a vehicle for the carrying on of large enterprises, without which we would retrograde and revert back to a very primitive and provincial mode of life. And while it may be true that some possessors of wealth are seemingly parasitical, in so far as not being actively engaged in business or rendering personal service to society; this is a very small factor and may be considered negligible; for the wealth they control is always doing useful work in one way or another. The large aggregations of wealth are absolutely essential for the operation of the mammoth industrial

undertakings, without which commodities could not be manufactured and sold at the reasonably low prices that puts them within reach of all. And the very fact that some wealthy persons do not, actively, engage in industrial enterprises provides employment, at large salaries, for many who have the ability to fill these positions, but lack the necessary capital.

My father was wealthy: but in place of giving me an ornamental education and permitting me to idle away my time, after having received a thorough schooling, I was started at the foot of the ladder, learning the business in all its various details. Promotion came step by step until I was capable of assuming full charge and intelligent control of the wonderful business machine which my father had built up, entirely through his own shrewd efforts and business sagacity.

Upon my father's death, I found myself the controlling owner of business establishments and property worth ten million dollars.

I do not look upon this wealth as so much hoarded—for me to enjoy—but, rather, I feel my responsibility as administrator, or what may be termed “Captain of Industry.” I guide and direct capital, and the accumulated earnings of capital, into new and profitable channels; thereby giving employment to a vast army of men at good wages and salaries, according to their respective abilities; enabling them to establish homes, properly support their dependents and to prosper along with me.

I do not beg anyone to work for me. If any of them can better their condition by going elsewhere, or by establishing themselves in business on a large, or small, scale, collectively or individually—Why! I shall be most happy to have them do so.

Really, I may say, if modesty permits, that I and my colleagues are laboring for the substantial welfare and prosperity of the country: that lacking our intelligent guidance industry would languish and stagnate and, in spite of the productive capacity of the country, starvation and want stalk rampant through the land.

Incidentally, I will frankly admit, my fortune has increased to about one hundred million dollars, through judicious investments and shrewd financial operations. And by continued foresight, gauging the future, I hope to materially add to its present worth and may bequeath to my children, possibly, as much as—well—I shall leave it unsaid.

INTRUSIVE VOICE, LISPING.

Mamma! Baby hungry.

INTRUSIVE VOICE, SOBBING.

Mamma! I'm hungry. Give me back my good shoes—I'm cold and my feet wet.

*Why doesn't Papa bring home any more money?
Why does brrr-rr-r-r*

THE ICONOCLAST.

Why should such a capable gentleman require the handicap of a pair of ten million dollar "shoes"?

But, go on, Sir! Tell us about your children! Are you following your father's example, and giving them a business training, also?

VOICE.

I desired my son to enter business. But the very idea of business, for some reason, appeared repugnant to him, and I must admit that, after making several half-hearted attempts, he refused, point blank, to "have his soul stifled in an atmosphere of grimy toil", as he expressed it. He has strong artistic leanings and spends the greater part of his time in Paris—its Bohemian "atmosphere" being very much to his taste. I am giving him a princely quarterly allowance, which he has repeatedly urged me to make monthly: showing that he is not entirely lacking in business acumen. And, having the means, why should he not follow his inclination? The greater part of the fortune coming to him will be invested in gilt-edged securities—so it really matters very little what he does personally. Still, wishing to continue the well known business established by my father, I am training a nephew who, I hope, will keep the name alive in the business world.

My youngest daughter has histrionic aspirations, the gratification of which we have absolutely forbidden her, frankly, because of the great prominence of the family—whose every member would naturally feel extremely mortified and embarrassed in the event of her appearance on the stage. Especially is this so since her sister married the scion of one of the oldest of

the noble families of Frengmany, the Duke of "Patent Leathers," heir to a large landed estate and one of the oldest castles in Frengmany.

VOICE.

Another old pair of "shoes."

I smelled them coming.

VOICE.

I feel that my children, having been born and nurtured in the very highest strata of society, are not on the same evolutionary plane as the ordinary human being, but partake of the essence of the superman. And while it may be urged that they are not producing, in a material way, yet, each one is doing something useful, in his or her sphere. My daughter being actively engaged in philanthropic and charitable work in the tenement district of New York; in addition to which she assists her mother in the exacting social duties and functions which a high station in society necessarily imposes upon its members.

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

How still and peaceful is the night—all the world is asleep—not a light—not a sound!

Have they no anxiety—nothing to worry them? Is it only I who have troubles? And I was so happy.

Oh, how little we know what is in store for us!

Six years ago! Oh, God! Why? why? why? Six little years! It seems like yesterday—how short it has been! And—now?

Who would have thought it, five years ago—three years—two years ago?

Oh, the memories! The memories!

How cold and serene is the moon, and that ocean of stars!

Is there anything there—up there, beyond? I wonder!

Shall I know?

Is there anything—anyone watching me from there? My husband? Shall I meet you? Are you waiting? Mother! Do you see me? Do you know what I am thinking of? Do you blame me?

But I can't help it! O, God! I can't help it!

But is there a God—up, somewhere, beyond the stars?

Why doesn't He let us know, positively?

Why are we kept in doubt?

Why does He let us suffer?

Why did He let this happen? It doesn't do Him any good—did He begrudge us our happiness?

Why does He let people do whatever they like?

Why does He permit so much injustice and cruelty?

Why did He let this man rob us? The mortgage was less than half its value.

Oh! The brute!

*God! Will you punish him? Rob my children—my poor little **** torture him in hell forev** No! No! No! Jesus said: "Love your enemies." No! I can't! I can't! But punish him some.*

Two o'clock! I must hurry!

Close the window! Make everything tight!

Yes—the key holes—

There — — — —

How sound he sleeps! Oh, if I could see his eyes once more—but I mustn't! He will never know.

Yes! Right here with your sisters—all together—we shall never separate.

Yes! We'll soon be with Papa. No! He will not blame me. Leave our little girls to face the world, alone—unprovided?

No—No—I couldn't! Not alone.

Yes, Mother! Very soon.

Our Father—who art—in heaven,

Hallowed—be—Thy—name

Thy—king——dom———come

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Yes, Doctor! I realize that this season has been too fatiguingly strenuous.

But come! It is only another fortnight!

I am having my yacht refitted and will go for a long cruise to The Bermudas and the islands of the West Indies, when I shall have ample time to recuperate. I shall brrr-rr-r-r-

THE ICONOCLAST.

A vast army finds employment and make a living, polishing, lacing and keeping these old “shoes” in trim.

The gentleman is working, using his brain, shrewdness and business ability.

He is playing a sort of percentage game, and is entitled—and so is any one else—to all he can legally earn, gain and accumulate, so long as he is able to keep out of the pen and the grave.

If the laws permit of pernicious practices, it behooves society to enact, modify and amend the laws for its own protection.

When a person cannot keep out of the penitentiary because of boodling and fraudulent practices, his "shoes" should be trimmed down whatever they have gained through these illegal practices. This is not always possible, but society will at least have the satisfaction of knowing that when he can no longer keep out of the grave there will be complete restitution.

Each and everyone of the vast army used in the game this gentleman's father played earned for him a certain percentage of everything they produced. And it was his by right and by all the rules of the game. For it is but moral justice that anyone who depends for a living upon the foresight, organizing ability or enterprise of anyone else must, to a greater or less extent, share his earnings with that party: and more so when this party furnishes the necessary material, tools and equipment.

The percentage gained is his to use as he sees fit; to spend, or to accumulate and reinvest, so long as he lives. But no more. For the wealth and materials of the earth are needed for those who are living, and the

dead have no right to impose a tax upon the living, or upon future generations, by holding down the resources with their old "shoes".

Nature has furnished an abundance of land and raw material for the human race to develop and use; but upon most of it has been planted old "shoes", and upon all material used a certain percentage must be figured in order to pay interest upon the valuation of these "dead men's shoes".

Labor, intelligent effort, and talent, are the keys to the world's larder; and the lock should be so fixed that without using these no man should eat.

The gentleman himself started unfair. For while an adult has a right to all he can earn, gain and accumulate, he has no moral right to anything earned by anyone else; even though that person be his own parent.

By nature he was endowed with shrewdness and intelligence, he received a good education, and was given exceptional opportunities and facilities for gaining insight and practical experience in business methods.

So far, well and good.

But, as if this equipment did not suffice him to hold his own in life's battle, he was given an advantage out of all proportion—to hold the whiphand over his fellow men—by simply stepping into his dead father's ten million dollar "shoes".

He feels responsibility as administrator—that providence has, in a measure, placed upon his shoulders

the welfare of a vast army of his fellow men—, but, if we scrutinize the matter close, we cannot fail to recognize that he is first and foremost the guardian of these old “shoes”. This is but natural, and there is no necessity for any hypocritical pretenses in the matter; although he may truthfully assert that upon critical occasions business has been carried on at a loss, because of pride and having the welfare of the country at heart—not wishing to utterly demoralize the situation by adding to the already large number of idle men, which would, in turn, bear upon and retard the changing of the tide into more favorable conditions and ultimately effect the welfare of the “shoes”.

There is also a well founded suspicion that if matters had been left in their natural channels, i. e., not influenced by the powerful, controlling favoritism of old “shoes”, the gentleman himself might occupy a much more inferior position in the economic structure; and men even more capable, who now possibly hold the inferior positions, would have forged to the top.

He is absolutely wrong, if he thinks that the well being of humanity, or any part of humanity, indispensably depends upon him or his little set of colleagues—for nature will, and does, produce millions of bubbles like him, you, or me.

Through it all stands out the fact that he hopes to make these old “shoes” so big, strong, self-contained and self-sufficient that, when he is no longer able to guide them, they may be guided by hirelings for the benefit of his children. And while thus guided, they

may move on indefinitely, ever gaining in size and importance, trampling and crushing the common herd, or anyone who gets in their way or attempts to interfere; but ever maintaining, in luxury and idleness, a clique whose feet they do not fit—yea, who pretend to be above anything appertaining to their operation.

The gentleman's children would undoubtedly become useful members of society, if obliged to be their own "shoemakers". As it is, their natural aspirations and talents are often stifled, or, at least, not developed. For since there is no necessity for them to bestir themselves, life becomes more or less a meaningless void to be droned away in selfish pleasure and idleness.

Thus these heavy, old "shoes" become a positive detriment, even in a social sense; depriving society of what would otherwise be useful members, and also depriving these same individuals of the best incentive for a useful, interesting and satisfactory life.

When dawdling becomes wearisome, or when some individual member of high society happens to be unusually energetic, there is the field of philanthròpy and charity. These are but makeshift remedies for the social ills—like smoothing over the surface of a bottomless bog. Charity, really, is an insult; for it is the plain duty of society to take care of those of its members who are, for any reason, incapable of taking care of themselves. And they should receive aid as their dues; not as charity.

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r- Ah! The family got a strangle hold here in the early days, and the "chips" are going the old "block" one better.

*They are worth many millions, due to the rapid increase in the population. I'll tell you something
brrrr-rrr-rr-r-r-r*

VOICE.

I certainly agree that these big estates should be cut down. For when a fortune runs into many millions, or even one million, it is far and above what a person really needs; and the wealth, which otherwise could be worked up and distributed among many, is tied up.

But a limit should be placed somewhere, in order to encourage the accumulation of moderately large fortunes and thus create a solid middle class.

I think a person should be permitted to inherit as much as fifty thousand dollars, because it would not be just to strip, entirely, those who have been born to wealth.

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrrr-rr-r- Well, "I should worry!" I don't have to work for a living. I brrr-rr-rr-r-

THE ICONOCLAST.

"Consistency, thou art a jewel!" Do you not believe in the "eternal fitness" of things—"equal rights to all and special privileges to none"?

Let every one start even, then sink or swim, according to what fiber he is made of: and let it be, truly, "the fight to the strong, the race to the swift".

It is so in every other contest. Why not in the contest for a living? One of the essentials of every fair contest is that the start be made even, or if any handicap is given, it goes to the weak.

Why, then, give the handicap to those whom the accident of birth has already given superior advantages? "What is sauce for the goose, is sauce for the gander."

If society is going to cure its present ills, it must remove the cause of these ills in a thorough manner. Half measures will not avail. Society must do justice to all its members and offer them an equal chance, without favors or privileges to any class.

In place of fostering any certain class, the object is to oblige every member of society, irrespective of what station he was born into, to rely upon and have recourse to his own native ability to carve out, for himself, a niche in the social and economic structure.

In order to give every man equal access to the country's resources, through his labor—and through his labor only—, and in order to maintain the value of these resources at their true worth, eliminate fictitious valuation and reduce speculation to a minimum, all the resources must be equally subject to the same rule of being, at least once in every generation, offered to the highest bidder, for the benefit of society as a whole.

Society also needs the proceeds from the sales of all its resources, to be used in place of taxes, for defraying the expenses of administration, improvements, and the maintenance of the necessary equipment for self-defense.

VOICE.

Your theory has many good points. But it is unjust to people in moderate circumstances who have worked hard to accumulate a few thousands in order to give their children a start in life.

I inherited three thousand dollars which enabled me to buy an interest in a business, marry and provide a little home for my wife. And you would have robbed me of this little advantage, or handicap, as you call it? I tell you, it is not fair.

Take away from those who have a superabundance, but don't rob us, little fellows—don't ask us to start with nothing—the Lord knows, we have little enough now.

You wanted me to start with my two empty hands, working for some one else, slaving and scraping for years before I could amass enough to venture for myself.

If I got married before, I would be taking still greater chances. What with sickness and trouble, children to bring up—feed, clothe and educate—, I would have to slave for someone else all my life. And if I did manage to put aside a little something, I would be afraid of making a venture for fear of losing

it all—leaving me and wife entirely destitute in our old age.

What incentive would there be for a laborer, mechanic, or small business man to try to save and accumulate anything, when, in the event of death, everything would be confiscated?

What would be the sense to buy a piece of property or a house to live in, when, possibly, just as it was all paid for, he might die and the government, representing society, would step in and assert ownership?

THE ICONOCLAST.

The chief obstacle to the abolition of “dead men’s shoes” will be found in the opposition of this class, due to the unwillingness to submit themselves to the justice of the principle applying equally to all. They will favor half-measures, temporizations and exemptions; losing sight of the fact that what is wrong in principle cannot be adjusted by a scale of degrees.

If it is right to steal one dollar, it is right to steal one hundred dollars; if it is right to inherit one percent of an estate, it is equally right to inherit one hundred percent; and if it is right to exempt one thousand dollars, it is right to exempt it all.

Under our present system, your class is the salt of the earth; always being ground between the upper and the nether millstones.

You stand between the two extremes of poverty and opulence, keeping them apart and from doing one

another too much bodily harm: they may main and hurt, but not exterminate one another.

You partake of both; and yet, the arrogance of the one and careless indifference of the other does not become you.

Your guiding stars are conservatism, responsibility, law and order. You keep the balance, and the more there is of you, to the exclusion of the other two extremes, the greater the stability.

Then let our aim be: the greatest good for the greatest number.

You would have the same incentive to save and accumulate that you have now—the incentive to provide for yourself and for your family—for the present and for the future—and a far better chance of doing so, and of getting something besides toil and worry out of life.

Of what you accumulate, one half belongs to your wife, who, if there are children, shares your responsibility towards them. In the event of death—leaving children—it will be used for their maintenance and education.

Your last hour need not be spent in worry that your children may be cheated and left destitute through a possible bank failure or the foreclosure of a mortgage. For when you no longer are able to use your “shoes” Uncle Sam steps in and takes charge of them.

If your equity is no more than what is needed for their (your children's) maintenance and education, rest assured that they will receive it, in such manner

as will best fit them for life's duty. Should it be more than what is needed to bring them up in wholesome comfort (not luxury or extravagance), Uncle Sam will keep the surplus, to be used for the common weal; and your children, upon arrival at age, will have the same chances as the children of anyone else.

Should the parents live, this system will do something more for them. It will protect them against their own natural, but foolish, inclination to continue toiling and slaving for their children when they should be self-supporting.

In the human genus, the natural instinct to care for their offspring is carried too far—beyond all limits. And in place of being strengthening and fortifying, it reacts and weakens; so that when some vicissitude removes the artificial provision made for them they are often left helpless. The fallacious notion that they can do their children's work by liberally providing for them not only deprives many parents of their own dues in regard to comfort and pleasure, but often they have the chagrin of seeing them grow up inefficient, indolent and vicious.

The realization that they have to make their own way in the world will put them on their mettle, develop self-reliance and bring out the best there is in them. They will be taught the true value of money by earning it; and, when the way is no longer clogged with "dead men's shoes", there will be abundant opportunities to advance and better themselves.

Perhaps more people will realize, when they are by law limited to the fighting of their own battles—letting future generations fight theirs—, that there is no blessing in a great superfluity of things, but only in what we are able to use and enjoy.

Let no one profit by the death of anyone. Let it be a loss in every respect. Do not temper the honest grief with secret joy of financial gain. Do not put the salve of gold on the tender wound, but keep it sacred and clean—and let time do the healing.

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r-r-r Yes, she is working her fingers to the bone, so that her "clotheshorse" of a daughter may imagine herself a lady.

INTRUSIVE VOICE. ()*

"A student's principal business is his studies. He needs money enough to buy food, lodging, simple clothes, books, stamps and the like, and to pay certain fees and dues, admission to a few entertainments, and special dental and medical bills.

"Any money supplied beyond these simple needs means that time will be wasted in spending it.

"A surplus of money is one of the biggest handicaps possible for the youth who expects to be a good student.

* Daily newspaper. (Credited to one of our leading university presidents.)

"It takes time to run an automobile and it often leads to life off the campus, to extravagance and much foolishness."

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r- "Swell time?"

Well, I should say so!

He gets a bigger monthly allowance than the annual salary of some of the professors. Brrr-rr-r

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r- It is more than three years since he returned from college. He seems to be a finished dabbler—in and out of everything going—but, for the life of me, I can't make out whether he is a fool or a genius. Only the other day he started to brrr-rr-r-

VOICE.

The main trouble with this theory is that it does not go far enough.

All land, resources, tools and equipment should be held by society in common and never be permitted to pass into private ownership; thus absolutely preventing one man from exploiting another.

One man has just as much right and capacity for enjoying life as another and, so long as he puts in his time at something useful, should receive the same credit, or pay, as anyone else, irrespective of his skill, working capacity, or kind of service rendered.

Exploitation must be stopped—and will be, when the government takes control of all industries, elim-

inates competition, and produces only enough for society's requirement.

VOICE.

Sure! Anyone may advance so far as he likes, in knowledge, skill, or science, so long as he works for the love of it; but he should not receive any emolument in excess of the common wage.

THE ICONOCLAST.

Given an even start, none but a weakling entertains doubt that among his peers he shall not be able to hold his own: and all he is morally entitled to is compensation according to the light that is in him and the service rendered.

The law of the survival of the fittest can not be ignored; and any attempt to maintain the weak and the strong, the dull and the intelligent, the frivolous and the earnest upon the same plane, financial or otherwise, must inevitably fail.

More or less rivalry is absolutely essential for a healthy body politic; and there is no surer or better way to quicken and stimulate skill, inventiveness and enterprise than financial compensation. We must not hamper and retard, but rather foster and promote, the natural impulse to excel.

Leaders are essential—always have been, and always shall be—, and the only hope for the man who has no initiative and no ambition is to take orders

from one who has intelligence, enterprise and energy enough to forge ahead of the waiting multitude.

Without leaders, we would be an unwieldy mob; and if the laborer is worth his hire—so is the leader.

The man who by sheer merit is able to advance and through his intelligence render society superior services, which in a greater or less degree benefits his fellow men, is morally entitled to a premium—and consequently to a percentage on the earning capacity of the man for whom his intelligent guidance, husbandry or enterprise has found employment.

The volume of production will always be governed by the natural law of supply and demand. And the best remedy for the existing evil of trusts, monopolies and watered-stock-corporations, now being operated for the benefit and maintenance of, privately owned, “dead men’s shoes”, is the formation of a gigantic pool, into which all “dead men’s shoes” shall gravitate, to be broken up, sold, leased, or held, for the common weal.

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

O, you wifey! I got a raise today. I have “bones” to burn. Let’s go out and have a blow-out! I brrr-rr-r

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r-r-r Never mind, dear! We’ll be on “easy street” one of these days!

Only a few more details to complete my invention—and it is going to be a success. Don’t let brrr-rr-r-r

VOICE.

You say: "Given an even start."

But there would be so many people ahead of a person, who had already gotten their start, when he was born into the world.

THE ICONOCLAST.

Some day—if he lives—he may have the advantage of them all, in having been here the longest.

But that will not profit him, if he does not avail himself of his opportunities.

VOICE.

Say! I have been listening, for quite a while, to you fellows shooting theories at one another, and wondering where I am going to get off at.

I find, when I am looking for work, that there are generally about fifteen men ahead of me, trying for the same job; and here is this "gink" talking about everybody going to work. What I would like to know is where they are going to get the jobs, when there is not enough work, now, to go around?

THE ICONOCLAST.

Perhaps it will be necessary to economize with the work, i. e., a shorter work-day, in order that there may be sufficient for the greater number of busy hands.

With better chances for earning and accumulating; with Uncle Sam proffering good farms, for sale or lease, at low figures; with the opportunities to invest in urban and suburban real estate, in interest bearing

stocks and bonds, shares in factories, mines, railroads, steamboats, banks, business houses, large and small, and all the numerous income paying assets that would continually gravitate into Uncle Sam's coffers in the shape of "dead men's shoes", and tendered, not to line a promoter's pocket with unearned profits, but at their true value; with universalized opportunities, those who have an innate craving for independence would soon eliminate themselves from the job-hunters, by husbanding their earnings and strike out for themselves, the more enterprising ones thus providing jobs for those lacking in this quality.

Furthermore, the time spent getting a start would be the best kind of a school, from which every man would have a chance to graduate by thrift and merit, and thus be truly selfmade—the capable advancing by natural selection, in place of holding their position in society merely because they stepped into a "dead man's shoes".

It would put a practical and true significance into the scriptural saying: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap", and permit no man to reap, where he has not sown.

It is idle to discuss what number of hours or amount of labor should be given for a certain wage, or what compensation should be rendered for a certain grade or quality of service; for these matters must be governed by natural laws, just as much as the cost of commodities and transportation, rate of interest, value of land, city real estate, or stocks and bonds.

But by ceasing to hold down the raw materials, resources and equipment through the planting of "dead men's shoes" upon them—the value of which enter into and governs the cost of commodities that the people must use and which are continually advancing in price, owing, mainly, to the increase in the valuation of these old "shoes" from generation to generation—labor and skill will at last come into its own and receive its just due as the only really important element entering into the cost of production of any commodity.

For some of the raw materials were here when Adam arrived, and some have been produced by nature since, free of charge to humanity and for its special use and benefit, and the people who live today have as much right to the free use of them as Adam had.

This man fears there will not be enough work for the increased working force—since everyone is required to earn his own living. He is worrying about his job. He has always had his hands full providing for his immediate requirements; hence is unable to look any further.

Have you noticed these men and women—how they strike out in life, buoyant and joyous, full of hope and confidence, bravely assuming life's duties and obligations? Have you met them later, a little tired and weary, but yet, courageously struggling on? Still later; can not you read in their faces how they begin to realize the utter hopelessness and despairity of the unequal task?

It is dawning upon them that they are in a groove, hemmed in, with no choice but to plod on, until they reach the door which will let them out into the great unknown. At last they realize it is a matter of being born right—of having had a forefather plant his “shoes” upon some of the resources which nature has produced for the equal benefit of all mankind. It cannot be changed now—more is the pity—but they must eat; and so, it resolves itself into a problem of finding jobs, polishing and keeping in order the “shoes” of the fortunate ones.

Have you seen them when in desperation they have taken a stand, imploring, beseeching, demanding a little larger share for their work of keeping these old “shoes” in trim? And, upon the defiant refusal, how they have turned, like wild beasts, crippling, burning and destroying the very means which nature and skill have provided us for our sustenance, convenience and comfort?

Have you observed them, blear-eyed and shaky—sunk to the level of the brute—trying, through the cup that cheers, to obtain short intervals of oblivion and forget their failure to find employment—forget the rent being due—forget that their little savings have been swept away, through enforced idleness—forget the cheerless home with its sickness and want, which they are powerless to relieve?

When in despondency they have thrown down the tools, saying: “What’s the use!” have you noticed them wandering through the land, beating their way on the

trains and steamboats, begging at the backdoors, and scurrying around, like vermin, at the approach of the police?

Have you seen them in the clutches of the law—before the judge, or behind the prison bars—because they have defied the rules of society in regard to personal property?

In all grades of society, the game is to get it away, by hook or crook, from others, so that we and ours may have enough. These were not clever enough to do it legally; but, knowing that life is short and wanting to enjoy some of its good things, they clumsily broke the law.

And the women, if they are clever and pretty, may find favor in the eyes of the fortunate ones and enjoy some of the good things of life—fine clothes, clean dwellings, good food and wine; leisure, music and pleasure—giving nothing much in return—only their bodies and souls.

But, the children! Have you noticed them—swarming in the gutters—ragged, dirty and unkempt; starved, sickly and diseased; precocious in everything that is evil?

Certainly you have noticed them—and what splendid opportunities for charitable work, which God has given you.

Should you, by any chance, be deprived of such a rich field for doing good, you would hardly know what to do with yourself. It is holier to give than to take;

and there is nothing else that gives you quite the same self-satisfaction as doing good.

But keep your charity, and dispense justice. Do not rob with one hand, to give with the other. Start even and earn your own way, and do not claim as your own what you have not earned through your own effort.

You do not see anything strange, or abnormal, in these men, women and children. "They belong to the lower class; and Providence has assigned us our different stations, which we should accept with gratitude, or resignation, according to our respective places."

No! You are wrong! Providence provided sufficient for us all. The unequal division is due to "dead men's shoes".

They do not irretrievably belong in this class; Providence did not place them there; nor did natural selection; they possess as full qualification for doing their share, and enjoying their share, as any other grade of society, if they are given an equal chance.

The abolition of "dead men's shoes" provides the only practicable means of taking the sting and bitterness out of the struggle between labor and capital; of levelling class barriers and artificial distinctions; and of making useful members out of the loafers and idlers in high as well as in low society.

It is the only practical solution of the economic problem as it exists in our era, and, in conjunction with

education and the ballot, the only hope of putting an end to extreme poverty, disgruntled social unrest, and, eventually, war. It provides the only means of giving every man an equal chance to profit and share, in full measure, according to his capability, in the achievements and improvements made by past generations.

There is not a man, with red blood in his veins and having the spirit of fair play in his heart, who would begrudge the relinquishment of his inheritance handicap for an even start under such a system.

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r- That's easy, sonny! Start with flowers and candy. Then open your purse and buy out the shops—be lavish—when you get your bird, you can economize. I know brrr-rr-r-

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r Oh! You must accompany me, dear! I am taking some discarded garments to a family in direst need. When I found them, they were on the verge of starvation.

O, you should see them! It is so interesting.

Do, come! There is a woman, ill, on the floor above, but I cannot determine whether she is worthy. One has to be very brrr-rrr-rr-r-

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r- Yes, the company acceded to our demands. I am making more money than I ever did be-

fore; but it all goes for a living—and, at that, we are not living as well as formerly.

I see, by the papers (), that "operators in Chicago pit are forcing wheat prices as high as the market will let them, while supplies are rotting on the quays in Australia, some being used as fuel, and large quantities are held up in Argentina for lack of ships".*

It's a wonder the people in Europe, who are lending themselves to organized murder, don't wake up and quit invading one-another's country whenever the war-lord whistles.

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r- Why! Don't you see that the interest of every man lies parallel with those of his own country.

If the war-lord sees that there is a chance of making his own country supreme and gain advantages at the expense of some other country, his subjects will be better off. If the war results in territorial acquisition, whether contiguous or colonies, they will have larger markets for their goods—which means, larger factories, larger profits, more men working, and more pay. It also makes his country stronger and the other country weaker, in case of future controversies.

Just the same as here; the whole trick is to get the best of the other fellow, so that we, and ours, may have enough—and then, there is the glory of it.

* Daily newspaper—August, 1916.

No, they are doing perfectly right and proper in warring upon one another, since they have a dispute serious enough to justify war.

The wrong is in their method of carrying on modern warfare—their own private quarrel—by interfering with and disregarding the rights of the neutral nations.

They should use a little system in these matters. There should be a place for everything, and everything in its place.

The different nations should hold a conference and agree to set aside a strip of country somewhere, or, better still, a small, barren island in the ocean, to be known and used as the international fighting ground.

All warfare should be strictly limited to land operation, the high seas being neutral and open to anyone for the transportation of foodstuffs, goods and commodities; troops, implements of murder and munitions.

Upon the declaration of war between two nations, they should immediately rush the massing of troops on the island, each of the belligerents having free access to the island from opposite directions.

By having a neutral squadron umpiring the game, the two belligerents could here welter and revel in one another's blood and gore to their hearts' content.

There would be no need to dig graves to bury the dead—send the corpses to the rear and roll them into the briny deep—and permanent hospitals, having

every modern convenience, could be erected on some adjoining island.

From a properly constructed grand-stand, the royal families, and distinguished visitors, could view and enjoy the tournament in comparative safety. Here, also, moving pictures of the drama could be taken, which would make the war a continual source of pleasant and instructive entertainment, and help to defray the expenses.

*Of course, the object of each belligerent would be to clear the island by driving the enemy into the sea. The one succeeding in doing this would be declared the victor, by the umpire, and by resisting and preventing the enemy from landing any more troops the war would automatically cease—there being no other place where fighting would be permissible. Just think
brrr-rr-r*

VOICE.

I have been listening with great interest to this discussion, but I must admit that I am very disappointed that not a word has been said about woman and her rights.

Is woman, then, always to remain a nonentity, with no rights or privileges of her own; a plaything of man—ever to be ruled by his whims and fancies?

Woman is as much entitled to a voice in the arrangement of society's economic structure as is man. And while I will admit that the proposed plan has many commendable features, still, you are looking at

it from a man's point of view; you fail to consider the interest of one half of the human race.

Woman, who, by nature, is ordained to be the bearer of the race, to nurture and care for its young, is, as such, entitled to special consideration, and even to privileges.

Woman, not being an active participant in the industrial strife, is singularly fitted to be the custodian and beneficiary of the accumulated wealth. Thus, shielded and protected, she is left free to work out her destiny, financially independent of man; which would, indubitably, redound to the welfare of the race.

In order to carry the theory into effect, an extensive administrative organization would be necessary. Why not simplify the whole matter by passing a law making succession to property in the female line only?

Of course, this would not improve the condition of the maid who was born and reared in poverty or humble circumstances. But there would not be any abrupt change in her economic situation. She is accustomed to it—has known no other life—and therefore is spared the mental depression, which would inevitably attend the sudden change from affluence and independence to poverty and dependence, of her wealthier born sister. Besides which she has, undoubtedly, either an early marriage in view, or, through preparation and training, fitted herself for a career commensurate with her station.

But consider a young lady brought up in a refined, luxurious home, amid fashionable surroundings,

where from early childhood loving hands have lavished upon her the delicate attentions and dainties that only wealth can procure. Shielded from all contact with a coarser world, with servants to wait upon her, and every wish almost equivalent to a command, her education a list of beautiful accomplishments, but of no utilitarian or commercial value—Sir! it is a sin—a crime—even to suggest that she should perform menial or any kind of labor for remuneration.

Furthermore, it would be utterly impossible to find suitable places and situations for all the unmarried women of age. Would you have them working for their wealthy parents, scrubbing the front steps, washing dishes in the kitchen, or assisting Bridget in the laundry?

The idea is simply preposterous and too idiotic to be considered. Legal or illegal, the parents would certainly provide for their daughters, and if the law necessitated it being done clandestinely and by stealth, it would merely be putting a premium upon dishonesty. For rest assured, they would take care of their own flesh and blood—their own little baby girls—if they had to go to jail because of it.

Sir! Have you never had a child, a sister, or a sweetheart? Or what manner of a man are you?

Can't you realize that the only hope for a girl accustomed to having her path made smooth would be to marry some doddered old grouch who has lived and toiled long enough to acquire a competence—to sell herself to the highest bidder, that she may have

the comforts to which she has been habituated from childhood and save herself from a life of drudgery and toil, for which she is wholly unsuited.

Then good-bye to love and romance; good-bye to the sweetheart of her schooldays—the mate who, by every rule of the game, should be the father of her children, but for the fact that he cannot, on the salary earned at a ribbon counter, undertake to support the woman of his choice.

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r- Oh, he is a charming man! But, my dear child, everyone knows that Count Flojo y Podrido came over, purposely, to capture the heiress of the Overshoe millions.

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r- and did you visit the beautiful home and sanatorium, erected and endowed by Mrs. Oldshoe, for the care and comfort of senile cats and dogs?

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrrrrrrr-rrrr-rr-r- What! you get a divorce? Ha! I'll beat you to it.

I promised you?

Well, I was a silly, sentimental girl, but I am wise now; and I can't understand what possessed me to marry such a cheap apology of a man as you.

Take your things and get out of my house! I am tired of supporting you and your family. When a girl is wealthy she never brrr-rrr-rr-r-

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r- There is nothing really the matter with her; she is simply dying from ennui.

You know, she was brought up in luxury and came into a big fortune. She went through several matrimonial entanglements and now, at thirty, is as blasé as an old woman. If brr-rr-rr-r-

THE ICONOCLAST.

Whenever in this discussion the word "man" has been used, in a general sense, it is meant to apply equally to woman.

The two sexes must ever go hand in hand—one the help-mate of the other. Be their fortune good or ill, be it feast or famine, they must share it.

Physically the inferior of man, hampered and restricted by reason of her maternal duties, she has, through the ages of savagery and during the period of semi-barbarism, been obliged to accept such protection, or ill usage, as man chose to accord her.

But a better era has dawned for her with the advent of a higher civilization—with its mastery of mind over matter—and with the aid of its conveniences and inventions she is rapidly coming into her own, as man's equal.

Equality is the proper balance, and should the pendulum swing the other way, it would mean the retrogression of the human race. For it is not logically feasible for woman to outdistance man by reason of superior natural advantages, and any attempt to exalt

her by artificial means would, in the very nature of things, be courting disaster.

The lady urges the plea that it would be impossible to find suitable employment or situations for all the unmarried women.

A large number of thinking men hesitate, and many actually refuse, to follow their natural inclination to marry and assume the responsibility of wedlock under the present unfavorable economic conditions.

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Through toil and labor the wilderness has been conquered, the land has been cleared and laid under the plow, roads have been made and railways gridiron the country. Every facility has been installed for the transportation of the raw materials from the fields, the woods and the mines, to the mills and factories. Every equipment that inventive genius has been able to devise is utilized in these mills and factories, for the conversion of the raw material into the finished product—the commodities which civilized man needs for his maintenance.

Why is it that in spite of all this, in spite of the perfect mechanical system—the labor and time-saving modern machinery and the network of communicating and distributing channels—and in spite of the skill and intelligence of our workmen, it is harder, more difficult, than ever before, for the man who performs the labor, to make a living, to establish a home, to improve his economic condition?

It is because the present generation does not share, equally, in the benefits of the labor and improvements made by former generations.

Unless a man can show a flawless title, reading clear, back to an original grant or purchase from The Creator, he has no right to reserve and endow to his children any part of the earth, its resources, or any part of these resources developed and finished by the labor of former generations. It is for his children to earn their share. It must not be given them—for it is not his to give—only to use.

And no government, society, man, or organization of men has the right to grant or deed away to any particular person, or favored set, the means of sustenance of unborn generations.

But for its serious consequences the idea would be ludicrous, to give a man who spends a few short years upon this earth the right to deed away and tie up property and resources for countless ages.

The incoming generation should have the same relative access to the earth and its resources, in its improved condition, that the first man and woman had, in its undeveloped condition.

This is what will occur when we do away with “dead men’s shoes”. Thereby putting an end to the two extremes of grinding poverty and snobbish wealth, universalizing opportunities, enabling a man to marry with a reasonable assurance of making a living.

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And this is the factor that will take care of, by far, the greater number of women. The young women, or those remaining single from choice, would have the same fields that are open to them now, with living conditions easier.

As for the daughters of wealthy parents doing menial labor, it may be recommended as being entirely honest and even beneficial, when not carried to excess. But on the other hand, if they place indolent ease and luxury above the love and industry of a man who is otherwise suitable, they may as well sell themselves to the highest bidder.

Perhaps there will be more of the milk of human kindness when we all have to travel the same road; when, flushed with success, we remember our early struggles and that our sons and daughters will also have to enter the contest.

Perhaps there will be less of fatuous criticism and fault-finding, of those who perform the real work and render useful service to society, by those whose chief accomplishments—under the present system—are foolish mannerism and pretended superior airs, while being utterly inapt themselves of doing their share of the world's work.

Perhaps we shall outgrow our narrow family-circle-view—for me and mine—and enjoy the larger feeling that our work, while maintaining us, is also improving our little part of the earth, not selfishly, exclusively for our own children, but for the benefit of the whole nation. (For we must still confine ourselves

to the nation. We can advance only a step at the time. And it remains for the future to decide whether there will ever be another step to take.)

In all normal men, and especially in those who have been successful, whose labor has lifted them out of the blinding struggle for the immediate wants, there is a feeling of dissatisfaction—a feeling that the game hasn't been worth while, unless they can employ some of their accumulated wealth for the common benefit—a secret craving to render some permanent service for the good and advancement of the race, that shall justify their own conscience that they have been of some use to their fellow men—that they have not lived in vain.

Under the new system of levelled classes—we shall all put our shoulders to the wheel and while laboring for our own maintenance, comfort and enjoyment, we shall also labor for the common good—the human race will advance and progress, as never before.

VOICE.

Spending an idle hour, I have listened from mere curiosity, for the whole scheme is a dream, a figment of the imagination. It brings to my mind the old saying: "Fools rush in, where angels fear to tread," if you will pardon my bluntness.

Being, for more than a quarter of a century, conversant with banking and business methods, and, also, being a close student of biology, sociology and political economy, I consider myself pre-eminently qualified to

speaking, and utterly condemn, as rank folly and suicidal, the hazy prating of this visionary demagogue.

In our advanced state of civilization, built up through centuries of gradual progress, our method of commerce and exchange is so interdependent, and our mode of carrying on the various industries so intricately correlated that any attempt at even minor changes and regulations often is the cause of grave disturbances.

What, then, would be the effect of a radical and revolutionary change of one of the fundamental principles upon which not only our whole structure of industry and commerce is based, but which is the main incentive for human activity and the very foundation of organized society?

It leaves no room for surmises; there can be only one answer to such a question. It would inevitably result in chaos, ruin and disaster.

Contemplate, for a moment, the immediate effect of even a serious consideration of such legislation.

It would engender a feeling of insecurity which in turn would create a downward tendency—I may say, a slump with no bottom in sight—in the value of all securities, real estate, stock in trade, and every conceivable kind of holding or vested interest; and, if it were not for the fact that the experiment would come to an early head and things be readjusted on the old basis, the country's resources and raw materials would be exploited for the benefit of foreign markets.

In such an attempt at confiscation—trying to get something for nothing—labor itself, in place of being benefitted, would be the first and chief sufferer. Because money would be hoarded—gold would disappear from circulation and be drained out of the country, causing the same effect as when the life-blood is drained out of the previously healthy body, leaving the useless carcass.

Many would sell their holdings, at any price—could they find buyers—in order to convert it into gold and save something out of the general wreckage. Mills and factories would close down, because of lack of orders, throwing the operatives out of employment with starvation staring them in the face. And men who previously were the main-stay of our business and industrial life would recognize the futility of continuing, when all incentive for any further activity had been forcibly removed from the system.

And how is it logical that a universal depreciation in all values may possibly benefit anyone?

When land values go down, it will ruin the farmer; and prosperity hinges more upon the well-being of the farmer than upon that of any other class. Will it be worth while to harvest the crop when there is no market, no money in circulation, and only the very lowest prices obtainable for what is produced?

And what good is it that foodstuffs are cheap when the laborer has not the wherewithal to purchase it, due to the inability to sell his labor? What does it profit that the raw materials are cheap, when the money has

gone into hiding and will not venture into the industrial field, since the country has lost its purchasing power because of the wholesale drop in values?

Labor is today in a better position than it ever has been before in the world's history. It is organized, not only for protection but for aggression, and has, beyond cavil, the upper hand of the situation. It is very insistent and never satisfied in its demand upon capital for shorter hours, and incessant in its cry for a larger and larger share of the profits.

The high cost of living and the high prices we must pay for commodities are due, mainly, to the short hours and high wages demanded and received by labor.

Capital is taking all the risk; what with the difficulty of finding and developing new markets and holding the old ones; of finding and developing new resources and raw materials; of fluctuating prices; of taxes, insurance, maintenance and all the numerous contingencies inherent in the situation, it occupies, with each passing year, a more and more precarious position. It often foregoes the right to its own legitimate profits in order to meet and conciliate labor in its demands; making the sacrifice to avoid industrial blockage and the serious consequences and inconveniences to the public due to strikes and lockouts.

Labor should practice economy, and be as calculatingly careful with its earnings as is capital. It should take care of the pennies and, through co-operation,

enter the field of capital, and thus, in a measure, eliminate the capitalist.

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r- Jim! You talk like you imagined it a very easy matter for the railroad presidents to grant your demands for an eight-hour day and time and a half for overtime; and you are throwing out a lot of wild talk about Wall street, watered stock, and titled European sons-in-law. But it is not so easy as it looks off from the top of a box car, with the straight road ahead, going down grade.

You must bear in mind that, to the people who manage the railroads, watered, as well as the unwatered, stock is not an asset, but a liability. Somewhere, between the time the road was built and the present, someone watered the stock; that is, reorganized and issued stock for more than the physical value of the property—and got away with the goods.

The managers can't remedy that matter. It is up to them to "saw wood", and make the earnings of the road cover operating expenses, upkeep, taxes, interest on bonds and all the other little wrinkles; and, if possible, pay dividends on the stock, whether watered or dry.

Don't you suppose the "lamb" that wandered into Wall street and bought a few shares of the stock in the road that you are working for would like some profit, as well as you do on those lots you bought, out in Woodbetown?

"You should worry" about the sons-in-law. You find someone who is able to tell dry stocks from what has been watered, and we'll have it sorted out—that's the only way to get down to "brass tacks".

Meanwhile, if you people get what you are asking for, you will have the managers in a bad squeeze, until they can figure how to best squeeze us—then they will have poor us, with no one to squeeze but ourselves.

Organized labor thinks itself clever in getting the best of the "higher ups"; but, really, they are only "passing the buck" and, in the end, "the chicken comes home to roost". Wait till you hear brrrr-rr-r-r-

THE ICONOCLAST.

Life is a strange, mist-bound journey. A few things we know, some more we surmise, many we imagine, but an infinite number remain entirely beyond us. Arriving with our faculties in a nebulous state, we, little by little, begin to perceive and distinguish—things are pointed out to us—we are commencing to realize that we are apart from the mist and not of it—and to recognize some few objects in our immediate vicinity. We are beginning to know—and all that has been observed and recorded we learn and accept as knowledge—and many things that we accept as facts, jar and clash with other accepted facts, until we despair of finding a solution to the myriad of conflicting problems. For our perspective extends only a little way into the mist—and what lies beyond—above—under—no man knows.

"Many men have many notions," and, even in matters pertaining to our present system, recognized authorities often make diametrically opposed prognostications.

The men who perform manual labor cast envious eyes upon those who are better favored. They feel that they are being robbed of part of the result of their labor, and are continually importuning for concessions, little realizing that the man they envy is equally a victim of the system, being bound and compassed about by obligations and contingencies which often make the load he must carry not only laborious, but nerve-racking and torturing. This applies especially to the man in moderate circumstances, operating on a small scale and with limited capital. Owing to a combination of speculation and "dead men's shoes", he must pay a high price for the raw and semi-finished material; what with keen competition and the poor markets that are open to him, his best chance to make a profit is by taking advantage of labor and through a low scale of wages reduce the cost of production.

And, like the sword of Damocles, there is always hanging over him the possibility that through some untoward circumstance—such as a fire, or a suit for damages because of an accident—financial ruin may reduce him to the same plane as his workmen, from whose level, unless he possesses exceptional native ability, he knows too well the difficulty of rising, especially if past the middle age.

Besides this, he has the status of his family to maintain; and the ever-present desire, necessary under this system, to leave as heavy a pair of "shoes" as possible, so that his children may not be trampled into the mire of our classified society.

The slogan of labor is: organize—stand up for your rights—cut down the profits of capital and give us a larger share. Modern machinery has reduced the necessary working force—therefore give us a shorter workday, so that all may find employment. Foodstuff and commodities are going up—therefore, give us higher wages, so that we may live.

When one craft of workmen organize and are granted their demand of higher pay, the supposition is that they are getting a larger share of the profits—they are able to live better than formerly.

But are they, really, getting the better of capital? Are they not, rather, taking an advantage of their fellow workmen—those organized crafts that have not yet received any advance—those who are not yet organized—and those who never will be organized? These are, as yet, producing commodities at a relatively low price, which gives a greater advantage to the craft whose wages have been increased.

When they have all advanced, up the one notch lead by the first craft, and capital, not being idle, has raised the price on foodstuff and commodities to cover the new cost of labor, they are, theoretically, on the same basis as before, but, in reality, in a worse condition. Because capital, in raising prices to reimburse

itself for the larger cost of labor, has figured in the higher cost of raw material and the extra interest upon a higher valuation of the plant, tools and equipment, which, because of the greater value of labor and material, would cost more to replace.

So long as the class struggle is carried on along these lines, the only ones to suffer will be the proletarians, for, while making war on the upper class, they are only hurting themselves.

When the classes have been eliminated, the struggle between the different branches of labor will still continue, but in the open and with a better understanding of one another's problems. For it is manifestly unjust to consider any demand, law, or measure that shall deal only with the interest of a certain craft, branch or class, without giving due consideration to the welfare of society as a whole.

But with the levelling of classes—with free and equal opportunities—those divisions of labor where the longest hours and smallest compensation obtains will be avoided, until there is a more equitable adjustment along natural lines.

Are we living better? Are we getting more out of life? Are we more contented? Is life's battle easier?

We are living more pretentiously; but as the years go by, the consumer will be carrying a bigger and heavier load and all, but those in the upper crust, find the strife more and more galling. As values advance, the demarcation between the classes will become more

and more pronounced, and the impediment to rise greater for those in the lower strata.

Any tax on property, commodity, or industry, eventually finds its way to and is carried by labor, making living conditions harder. Practically, the only tax which cannot in some measure be made a burden upon labor, and which is also the hardest one to avoid, is the inheritance tax; and for this reason the imposition of such a tax, in itself, would make living conditions easier.

By the abolition of "dead men's shoes", i. e., the enactment of a one hundred percent inheritance tax, all other forms of taxation could be discontinued, with the exception of such as would have to be imposed for regulation and in order to maintain proper economic conditions. Under this head would come a, probably necessary, export tax on raw and semi-finished material, and a stamp-tax to regulate and validate the sale and transfer of commodities in bulk, property, stocks and all classes of securities, between individuals.

Theoretically, foreign trade is beneficial only in so far as we can exchange our surplus of certain products which we have special facilities for producing in abundance, for other products which we either cannot produce or, for some reason, produce of inferior quality only. But the conditions are abnormal, and should be remedied, if we neglect our own resources simply because we can buy the foreign product cheaper. We can exchange freely with other countries only in the measure that both people conform to the same standard

of living, and even then their resources of certain lines of raw materials may be so abundant, in comparison to the population, that they can well afford to undersell us in our own market.

If the people would take concerted action to protect their interests, the country producing the prime necessities in abundance, such as foodstuff, clothing and fuel, would always have control of the situation. Therefore, the tariff, regulating export as well as import, should be scientifically adjusted; having in view the economic independence and true welfare of the country.

Exploiting a foreign market for individual gain should be permissible only in so far as it does not work a hardship to our own people. There is no good reason why we should pay greatly increased prices for our foodstuffs, to swell large individual profits, because of political disturbances and wars in other countries.

When a people obtains the raw material from a foreign source, converts it into a finished product and sells it in a foreign market, they are exploiting someone coming and going, profitting and rendering useful service the while. But when the people who control the raw material, and those of the foreign market, are educated and wake up to their possibilities, they will, unless coerced (and right here is a fruitful source of international friction and war), gradually eliminate the middle-men, leaving them in a precarious position, because they have been enjoying a fictitious prosperity

which did not work along natural lines but was based upon the backwardness of the people they dealt with.

The abolition, by these countries, of "dead men's shoes" would put a short stop to indiscriminate foreign exploitation of their resources, and hasten the adjustment along natural lines.

The present machinery for the collection of taxes being obsolete, a new system would have to be devised. This would probably take the form of a local system for each county, being under the supervision of the state head office, which should in turn be controlled by the federal head-administrator.

There should be proper birth registration, and official transfer upon removal from one county to another. This would be useful for other purposes also.

The duties of the local officials would be to take charge of all "dead men's shoes", break them up, appraise their minimum value, and, within a specified time, advertise and sell them, at public auction, to the highest bidder.

It should also be their function—in the case of the defunct leaving minor children—to determine, in accordance with certain set rules, what proportion of the proceeds of the estate should remain in Uncle Sam's coffers, subject to the order of their guardians, for the children's maintenance and education, until they become of age.

The balance should be divided, pro rata, to defray the expenses and to carry on the work of the city, county, state, and federal administrations.

The selling for cash, or part cash, to the highest bidder, a life interest in property, would have a tendency to eliminate wild speculation and keep the prices of land and raw materials low and steady; because, in place of, as now, buying and tying up for fear it might be gobbled up by someone else, Uncle Sam would carry the surplus—giving society the best opportunity to properly conserve and, wherever possible, increase its resources (as, for instance, in the case of standing timber), and we would buy as we required.

The moment anyone thought business justified, he could ask to have some property, that had not brought the minimum appraised value, put on the auction block again.

Thus, when land, or property of any kind, commanded a good price, the higher bidding would benefit society; and when someone, through shrewd foresight, had bought while it was cheaper—considering there would be no taxes to pay—the increase would accrue to his benefit; but when he has enjoyed the fruit of his enterprise and labor the residue, upon his decease, reverts back to society.

If a person is inclined to be greedy, it is his privilege to buy all the land, property, or stock, that he is able to arrange to pay for. He may live frugally, save and reinvest his income, go so far as he likes—there should be no limits; for it is his to use as he sees fit, within the law. But when he slips out of his shoes—

"good night"—straight into Uncle Sam's coffers they go.

By this method, shares in industrial plants and railways would be brought down to its real value, which is—for the total capitalization—the cost of reproducing the plant, tools and equipment; and upon that value it should pay a fair rate of interest. Thus the shares and securities would be safe for the operatives to invest their earnings in, making them the real owners.

When anyone thought he had acquired enough to live upon the income, it would be his privilege to retire; or to continue working—in order to have more to spend, or to accumulate—should he feel so inclined.

Under such a system, the leverage that may be attained in a lifetime will not prove a menace to society. It is only when resources, land, tools and equipments are tied up and handed down from generation to generation that it becomes a class builder.

On the other hand, if nature has endowed a person with unusual talents—if gifted with special aptitude for the management of large affairs—he will stay in the game for the service he is able to render, and not, primarily, for the money he incidentally acquires as the result of his activities.

The cost of land and raw materials should be, theoretically, no more than its share of the expense of administration. But, as now, there will be many undertakings in which society must engage, as a whole, for the care and protection of its members; such as

the reclamation and développement of new lands, the dredging and controlling of rivers, and, until the majority of countries adopt a similar system, the maintenance of a military establishment for protection.

There is also another factor which will govern the regulation of prices, and that is competitive bidding, and this—when conducted openly and fairly, and when the estates are broken up so that the common people can bid—is, by far, the best adjuster of values.

And thus the public treasury will fare as fares the people; and improvements be carried forward according to some comprehensive plan that shall aim at the development and utilization of the countries' natural resources; not for the gain and benefit of a select few, but to make it more and more safe and habitable for the people and yet not stifle individual incentive, enterprise and freedom.

Ultimately, when all resources and every foot of available land on the earth has been developed to the utmost, with the race still increasing, there remains only two solutions, if the standard of living is to be maintained, and they are: to war upon one another, or to restrict the birthrate.

Given a certain standard of living, the larger the population the higher will be the values. Therefore, an excessively large increase in the population is no more to be desired than an excessive diminution. There is a happy medium, like in most other things mundane.

Up to the present we have drifted along in a "happy-go-lucky" sort of way, with a continuous

feast and famine performance at the expense of one another; every one contributing to the feast, but only a select few drawing the lucky tickets entitling the holder to a seat; making bloody wars upon one another, sometimes with the worthy aim of insuring that our enemy took the right road to heaven, but most generally on account of squabbles between the claimants of some "dead man's shoes".

It is not to be disputed but the new system will cause a radical disturbance in the existing order of things; and it is so intended.

The present fictitious valuation will be reduced and for a time things will be in a more or less chaotic state until adjustments can be made in conformity with the new system. It will take years to enact laws and regulations to safeguard against, and eliminate, new abuses and pernicious practices that will arise and develop with the new system.

Those who have already inherited, and therefore are in possession of a large surplus, would have an undue advantage, being able to buy at the lower prices and temporarily control some of the resources. Many, being hostile to the new order of things, would use their wealth to block and in every conceivable way endeavor to bring discredit upon the new system; but with the expiration of the present generation it would be in full working order.

The old institution of inheritance is so bred in the bone that many would feel morally justified in resorting to fraud and subterfuge, yes, even to force, in

order to circumvent the newly enacted law. This was done at the time of the abolition of chattel slavery and still happens in connection with the enforcement of the excise tax on whisky.*

The viewpoint of a great many people is determined, not by the intrinsic merit of a case, nor yet by its effect upon the general welfare of society, but by the simple process of considering its immediate advantages or disadvantages to "me" and "mine".

The new system will accrue to the advantage of by far the larger majority of people, for there is nothing gained by staggering under a burden of fictitious valuation to pay interest and taxes upon; when we get down to a natural, common sense basis, many of the ulcers of society will disappear, we shall be healthy and get more out of life.

There will be no confiscation, for no man will be deprived of anything that he himself has earned, gained and accumulated; he will not even be required, as now, to pay taxes upon its valuation; it will be his, to enjoy, absolutely. He has the first right, because he rendered service which earned and gave him the right to draw it, for his own use, from society's storehouse; when he is no longer among the living, it must revert back to the storehouse, so that the incoming generation may also have a chance to earn it.

As usual, we are confronted with the threat of gold disappearing from circulation.

* Written in 1916,

We have worshipped the golden calf so long that whenever he tosses his shaggy head humanity trembles. Gold has been singularly suitable as a medium of exchange, and through this suitability has derived its great value. But should a serious attempt be made to turn it into a golden club, means may be found to demote it—at least until it is again available for the service of humanity in its proper sphere.

Under the new conditions we shall not require such a large volume of money; but if we do use the large volume, labor must receive compensation more nearly in proportion to the existing valuation of resources.

Since every man would be obliged to pay, primarily, with his labor, there would be no buying with money as capital—the slate being wiped clean between each generation—but with the medium of exchange as representing services rendered.

For the medium of exchange, accumulated, is nothing but an obligation to be paid in labor at some future time.

For when a person renders service, he receives the medium which enables him to exchange his labor for the labor of others—resources being free, since they were placed here free, by nature. True, he would be required to pay for resources also—but only because and to the extent of exchanging his individual service for the collective service of society as a whole.

When he loans money to anyone, he lends his labor, already accomplished and preserved, for his own benefit, in the form of the medium of exchange, and is

morally entitled to compensation, or interest, for the use of it.

There is even a possibility that by using an artificial medium of exchange better control may be obtained of its volume by placing a time-limit upon this obligation to pay in labor—all notes bearing a due-date, before the expiration of which they should be exchanged for new ones.

A very serviceable medium of exchange may be formulated by issuing notes against the total wealth of the nation, redeemable in that wealth itself.

It may be contended that this has been tried and found unsatisfactory. But it has never been tried under similar conditions. Under the new system, there would be a continuous influx of every description of wealth into Uncle Sam's coffers, from a cradle to a coffin, and everything that man may require between the two. Consequently, the notes could actually be redeemed in the very wealth upon which they were based. The mere, serious, consideration of thus demonetizing gold would make the golden calf meek and gentle.

The farmer will not be ruined. The land will still be there, and as fertile as ever.

It will not have such a high value.

Very good! That will save him from working early and late, all his life, in order to pay for it. In place of working to cover the fictitious valuation, he will have money to spend upon himself and his family. He will not receive so much for what he produces, and

neither does he need to figure taxes or interest upon the false valuation.

And, with the parasites separated from the system, perhaps we shall be able to make a closer connection between the producer and the consumer, certainly transportation charge, storage and rent will be more nearly their true value, and the same applies to machinery and everything that the farmer requires.

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r Yes, John! Alongside of your mother. Nothing has been the same since she died; but it was always our highest wish to clear the place, so you wouldn't have to go through what we have done.

Life has been just one long, toilsome workday; but, thank God, I lifted the mortgage at last.

Everything is in good shape; and I wish I could stay to see the children grow up and have a good time, and you and your wife make a good living off the place; but I am so tired.

Is it time, now? He said: "Every two hours".

John! Put up a monument, just a plain one, right between the two of us; and don't spend too much for the outfit. Pete Hopkins is rich enough now, and you might as well have it, anyhow.

VOICE.

What is the use of all this talk?

The proposed law is certainly, right on its face, confiscatory; and the constitution of the United States would be irrevocably opposed to it.

Thank goodness, the constitution cannot be easily amended, and the vested interests of this country would fight, as one fights for life, with every conceivable weapon at their disposal, any such amendment.

Do you wish to precipitate civil strife and disorder?

There is entirely too much of this going on, and I, for one, think that a check should be placed upon free speech of this caliber.

Granting, for the sake of argument, that such a law is placed upon the statute book; in place of improving the economic condition of society, it would drive us "out of the ashes into the fire".

In place of levelling classes, it would create a new, powerful, office-holding class, and make all the common people servile subjects of a corrupt, ruling bureaucracy.

The system would eventually drift into government ownership of all utilities—sounding the death-knell to individual initiative, enterprise and self-reliance—making us all "serfs" and "peons" to the ruling class.

THE ICONOCLAST.

In common with many other countries, we have already a law imposing a small, graduated inheritance tax; and which is not held to be unconstitutional.

Granting that this is a tax for revenue—but so would the new tax be.

The crux of the matter is: where does revenue taxation end and confiscation begin?

The constitution should not be amended hastily or for trivial reasons. But as society advances and new conditions arise, when the majority of the people deem that a change is necessary, or desirable, only ignorance and stupidity would oppose changing it to meet the altered conditions—for the constitution was made for the people, and not the people for the constitution. The framers of the constitution were products of their period and envioning conditions—just as we are the products of our period—and were no more gifted to look into the future, perhaps not as well—for we have, since, covered the most wonderfully progressive cycle in the world's history and may, by that, have a better inkling of what the future has in store.

As society advances, the constitution must be amended from time to time to conform with the altered conditions, or become a shackle, impeding society's progress.

There are only two things necessary to attain the proposed change in our economic system, and they are: education, and the ballot. There will be strenuous and bitter opposition, but, once we realize where lies truth and justice, buried under ages of false pretenses and impositions, no vested interest, gold or glitter, can stem the avalanche, precipitated by its own, unwieldy, over-balancing weight.

Government ownership, as well as the government itself, all hinges upon the people; for, more than ever, the majority will rule.

Under our present system, many citizens are indifferent about their government.

They say, it is being run for the benefit of the upper classes.

They would not fight for, or defend, the country.

They say, they have no country, nor part or parcel in it—being owned by and run for the benefit of those whom the accident of birth has given the advantage.

No human arrangement will ever be flawless, nor can any system be made so perfect that it will absolutely guard against dishonesty. However, if we are to be robbed, it is preferable to have it done illegally.

But when the economic conditions depend more directly upon how society's governmental affairs are managed—when it is brought right home to us, in our own neighborhood, and governs the prices which we must pay for property (consequently, also, for commodities) that we have an equal chance to acquire—we shall all be not only citizens but, virtually, stockholders, and, as such, will guard our own interest, making it our business to see that the concern is being run wisely and economically, or know the reason why.

In the executive branch of the government, we should have elective managers for each department, having complete control and appointive power over their subordinates—so there may be no shuffling or shifting of responsibility.

Limit the number of elective offices; penalize campaigning by candidates or office-holders; and automatically disfranchise all elective and appointive office-holders from voting at general elections.

All the governors of the different states should automatically stand as candidates for the presidential office, and the same principle should govern throughout the system—making the lower office a training-course for the higher one, and still leaving in the hands of the electorate the determination of the incumbent's fitness to occupy the higher office.

By making the subordinate office-holders, whether elective or appointive, candidates for the higher elective office, becoming so automatically, according to rules and regulations, a premium would be placed upon efficiency.

Elect the chief office-holders for a given term, give them power, and trust them—then, when things are not running satisfactory, we shall know just where the trouble is.

Let him be an autocrat in his own department—"hire" and "fire" as if he were running his own, private business—for that is the only sensible way to get results.

There would be less danger of drifting into government ownership, with its concomitant crystallization and unwieldiness, than there is under our present system.

The very fluidity of the new system, the abundant opportunities offered, the necessity, not only of a cer-

tain class but for all, to bestir, and rely upon themselves, would preclude government ownership.

For government ownership is advocated only as a panacea against the "octopusian" proclivities of a certain class.

VOICE.

Our people are departing more and more from the spirit of our father's.

There is a rebellious feeling abroad in the land, grumbling against the established order of things—urging freakish legislation and the demolition of the old safe-guards which our patriotic forefathers wisely erected for our protection against ourselves.

This theory is certainly the last straw, and if there was any chance of it becoming a law, I and my family, and a great many others, would immediately convert our holdings into gold, shake this American dust off from our feet and emigrate to Europe, or some other country, where our property rights would be respected.

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r-r- And your forefathers came over on the "Mayflower"—My Word!

By Jove! There is nothing that appeals to me quite as much as "blue blood", don't you know.

To be able to look back through the mist of the ages and mentally see your ancestors acquitting themselves nobly—always in the van of the turmoil of the period.

And the same principle applies, in a lesser degree, to nationalities, don't you know.

You will pardon me—I may appear prejudiced—but to be entirely frank—I have always entertained a secret feeling of pity, verging almost upon contempt, for men of other nationalities, don't you know.

When I read history and consider the brave and valorous deeds of our forebears, and when I look about me and recognize that the mere fact of being a Frengmaniac denotes superior intelligence, sound, common sense and downright, unqualified honesty—By Jove—I have a glowing feeling of pride which sends the blood surging through my veins, while my heart beats a challenge, defying the whole human race to compare with us.

“Gott in himmel!” I can see my ancestors, with the crusaders, go thundering through Europe, fighting for a noble cause, far back in the middle ages.

One of my ancestors rendered distinguished services to the king of “Frengmany”, in acknowledgment of which he was knighted and a large landed estate entailed upon the family.

“Sacre Nom!” I have lost my cigarette-case.

Thanks.

The estate is at present in the possession of another branch of the family, which leaves me—as you, Americans, say—“on my uppers”, don't you know.

Au revoir, old chappie! It was very good of you to accommodate me. By Jove! the remittance must have been delayed by the post, don't you know.

THE ICONOCLAST.

It is not ethically right to drain the fruit of labor out of the country that produced it, without returning value in kind.

If he would take the gold and promise faithfully (and keep his promise) that, as soon as he arrived on the other side, he would have all of it cast in the image of a calf, to be used as a family fetich until the end of time, we could say: "take it; we are the gainers by your departure". But what he really does take is our ham and eggs, our wheat and commodities; thereby reducing our abundance without giving us anything in return that we did not have before.

Nevertheless, so long as these practices are not carried to such an extreme that it imperils the welfare of the nation, the only course open to us, after he has paid the stamp-tax, to validate the sale of his property, will be to bid him farewell and wish him a pleasant journey.

But there is another thing his gold will do. It will create a temporary, fictitious prosperity and raise values out of all proportion in those countries, and hasten the time when they also shall change their system.

Some of those countries are staggering under a war-debt yoke which will keep them enslaved for generations to come, unless they adopt this system.

If he emigrated to one of the new countries, the same thing would happen, only that it would take longer time. Temporarily, he and his children would

enjoy an advantage that was denied them in this country, but sooner or later—and if the influx of gold was heavy, sooner—the economic condition would be such that the people of that country would follow the example set by the countries that had already adopted the one hundred percent inheritance tax policy.

Should he lose his gold in some industrial gamble in one of those countries, the story would read somewhat differently. Having lost his golden lever, the prodigal son would make a “bee-line” for this country, where he knew the greatest reward for individual effort would be obtainable.

And that brings us, in natural sequence, to the question whether immigration is beneficial or not.

The newly arrived immigrant would naturally be exploited by the native, or naturalized, citizen, but gradually the material would be worked up and amalgamated with the population, just as is being done now.

Our country is, as yet, only partly developed, and is well able to sustain a much larger population, not to the detriment of those who are already here but, on the contrary, for mutual gain and benefit.

However, it would be well under all circumstances, and especially if the influx of immigrants is heavy, to set a high standard. Since we have the privilege, why not select the best animals in the herd? That is what will count in the long run. The schooling is of minor importance, for, given healthy bodies and clean minds, we can always teach them tricks.

VOICE.

Sir! If such a law was passed, I would squander upon my children the major part of my wealth.

I would bring them up in the greatest luxury and extravagance, giving them a good time while it was in my power to do so; knowing that, upon becoming of age, my wealth could no longer serve them.

I would also convert into gold and convey to them, surreptitiously, as much of my wealth as I possibly could without exciting suspicion; and I would feel morally justified in doing so.

I would give my friends presents with the greatest liberality. Or perhaps this would not be permitted? Perhaps we would be forbidden the joy of even our customary christmas, new year, birthday and wedding gifts?

What a pleasure it would be to live under such a system!

What would be the incentive of doing anything? Why be enterprising or industrious? Why work any more than just enough to stave off starvation?

Let the government keep it all, and we will eke out an existence as best we may. What would be the sense to buy land or any kind of property; or to build and improve? Why not just lease it from the government, and live from hand to mouth?

There is still another issue that this law would have a bearing upon, and that is the marriage relation, the sacredness of which is strengthened, preserved and

maintained by the right and privilege of transmitting our property and goods to our children.

To dispossess us of this right would inevitably work havoc to the institution of marriage, foster looseness in our morals, and eventually develop into an accepted state of promiscuity in the relation between the sexes—which would deprive the children not only of their property rights but of the proper parental care and guidance and the clean love and affection which goes with a well regulated family life.

And what is the government going to do with all this money—all this wealth—in case the bidding brings its income far above what is required for its maintenance?

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r-r-r It is impossible. Father would cut me off without a cent; he has already warned me—and he means it.

Go to the city and keep dark until it is over; I will give you all the money you need.

You are more to blame than I am—you set out deliberately to trap me because I was wealthy—, now take your medicine.

Don't you know, a woman's beauty is her soul, lacking which she must need have recourse to the allurements of her body?

You, women and girls, in your mode of dress—draped to make a teasing display of your sexual wares

—in your manners and behaviors, appeal to the basest in man.

You love to dally with spicy subjects; holding yourselves cheap in order to be good fellows and to have what to your oblique taste seems pleasure—in your anxiety to avoid being prudes, you go to the other extreme, priding yourselves the while upon your imagined superior broadmindedness—but when you get caught in the net of your own spreading, you whimper and whine.

I don't mind telling you that when my father was sick I had a chance and was tempted to give him an overdose. That would have fixed the money matter. But I would not, now, marry you, under any consideration—a woman who will do anything to obtain a fortune.

You have the shell—perfection of physical charms in the highest degree—that is enough for most men and blinds all for a time. We should let the head decide, then seal it with the heart—for beauty never binds, it only blinds.

The Lord knows, my own ideals are none too high. All the more do I need a mate whose influence is for the better, whose companionship has a tendency to bring out the best and not the worst in me.

Marrying you would help neither one of us—for “two wrongs never made one right.”

THE ICONOCLAST.

A parent is the guardian of his children and, so

long as he does not neglect, abuse or pervert them, should not be interfered with. But any parent, having his children's true welfare at heart, will bring them up and train them with a view to their future career.

It is obvious that they will be poorly equipped for life's battle, if brought up in indolent luxury and having their childish cravings indulged in every way. And unless wealthy parents wish to see their children lose out in life's contest, it will behoove them to invoke some of the "Spartan" methods, because their artificial goldprops will no longer serve.

It should be the highest desire of every normal parent to equip his children, not with a superfluity of glittering, hallow accomplishments and empty graces, serviceable only for outshining one another in "vanity fair," but with true knowledge and the development of some talent that will be of practical use in doing their share of the world's work—serve them as a means of earning a livelihood and to become worthy citizens.

The accident of birth will still give them great advantages. For it is but natural when the parent occupies a position of control that he should favor and give preference to his own child—everything else being equal—and quite often, other things not being equal—but, ultimately, true quality will tell.

A token of friendship and good will should not be measured by its money-worth, and costly gifts generally vitiate the spirit of true appreciation of friendship. Most of our giving is merely the swapping of

presents—debasing it to the level of commercial exchange and swerving true friendship towards hypocrisy.

There should be no interference with the giving of tokens of friendship and esteem. But, under a system that is based upon the fact that what we have acquired is ours to use but not to give, it would be wise not to invite suspicion and comments; for it may be quite easily determined what is a token of good will and esteem or what is meant to circumvent the law.

We can legislate against dishonesty; but we cannot, by legislation, make people honest.

The right kind of education will be a big factor in this matter. And the new system will have a tendency to cultivate a spirit of fairness and integrity—"to live and to let live"—in contradistinction to the present system, which practices getting the best of one another and to profit by one another's misfortunes.

We deplore the increase in crime and lawlessness, and yet do not realize that it is but the consequent product of what is practiced in all grades of society—to get the advantage of one another—to hold one another down—to speculate upon and profit by one another's necessity.

We teach and prate to our children of brotherly love and forbearance, but our highest aim in life is to make a big, fat profit out of our brother's necessity—to gain something that we have not earned. And, under our present system, "we must do others, or they will do us."

Let us, then, change this system; so there may be no vestige of hypocrisy in our teaching or practice.

Then will the growing generation acquire such a deeply rooted consciousness of honesty that every man who yields to the temptation of wrongdoing will, of his own accord, come forward, as his own accuser, and demand punishment.

When the policy is that every child born into the world will have the same access to the world's wealth as any other child, we shall have a more fundamental spirit of honesty and justice; and the time will come when no greater reproach, or slur, can be cast upon any man than to accuse him of having started unfair.

We are all prone to complain of rapacious and grasping corporations, that they are, by monopolization, excluding the man of moderate circumstances from the field; but the same heaven is at work in all grades of society—we are all actuated by the same motives. And we have no right to urge a restraint upon them, because they operate on a large scale, if we are adverse to submit to be restrained ourselves; for the principle is the same.

The members of the big corporations are striving, with might and main, to tie up as much as possible of the world's wealth, for themselves and their children; and that is, precisely, the aim of the common people, on a smaller scale, but still to the utmost of their ability.

In regard to the marriage relation; if its sacredness hinges upon such a flimsy contingency as "property

rights", it is small wonder that it is continually being made cheap, violated, and made sport of; that consecutive polygamy obtains; that homes are broken up and the children treated to discord and strife in place of love and affection; that women regard marriage as a meal-ticket, and that the parasitical tendencies are developed and practiced in the institution of marriage.

With the new system, we shall have a finer feeling in these matters. Wedlock will no longer mean the union of fortunes, nor, to any such great extent, the capturing of wealth as the main consideration and happiness and the children's welfare as secondary or not considered at all.

The gentleman questions: "what would be the use of being enterprising—or of doing anything?"

We shall still have our living to make. And for the first time in history will a man's position in society be determined by the service he renders, and not by his capacity to enjoy the wealth accumulated by a previous generation.

Should anyone think that the game is not worth while, because he is not permitted to hand down an unfair advantage to his children, it will be his privilege to hang back and sulk, while the others move forward and enjoy the good things of life.

Is it reasonable to think that we shall not be enterprising because taxes are not required of us; that we shall not be prosperous because part of our earnings are no longer used for paying tribute to an idle-rich class; that we shall not be happy because denied

the privilege of polishing a lot of "dead men's shoes"; that we shall not be able to enjoy life because of the fact that, when we can no longer eat, drink, or wear clothes, all our substance will be taken from us?

Leasing, at a fixed rental or on a royalty basis, is not such a bad idea. But man, especially in his youth, is generally optimistic in regard to the future—life is before him, and death a long way off. He is ambitious—he wants something that he can call his very own, to be lord and master of—and the purchase price he pays is a wager that he will live longer than the number of years required to total the price in rentals.

He will build and improve, just as is being done now, for the income, and, if he is broadminded, public-spirited and has the means, for esthetic reasons and to serve his fellow men.

If few houses are built, rents will go up; making the incentive to build greater.

The tendency of our present system is to build up values as high as possible, to maintain them at a high level, and to build them still higher—to concentrate the wealth into the hands of the few.

The tendency of the new system will be to reduce values as low as possible, to maintain them at a low level, and to prevent them from going higher than what would be necessary to carry on the administrative functions and such work as tended to the welfare of society as a whole—to distribute the wealth among the greatest number.

Under a system that is based in such a way that no fictitious valuation can be added and built onto indefinitely, wages, length of workday, rates of interest, and prices of commodities, land, railway and industrial stocks, or property of any kind, will be governed along natural lines and will not deviate greatly to one extreme or the other. It will put a short stop to most of the gambling and speculation; business being conducted more on a cash basis; more to cater to our needs, and less with profit as the sole object in view; and auxiliary laws should be enacted to guide business along these lines.

There will, undoubtedly, be small souled persons, consumed with anxiety to squander and clean up everything they possess just before the final exit, and who will feel that they are not getting the best of the deal, should Uncle Sam find any leavings. But as time passes, introducing a more wholesome spirit, their number will be negligible.

Uncle Sam, then, as now, will find numerous uses for the money.

First, we have the maintenance of the city, county, state and federal administrations with their ordinary expenses and expenditures co-incident with their function. (Perhaps, with the lower values, the income will not be sufficient for the maintenance of the government. Perhaps it will still be necessary to levy municipal taxes and assessments for local improvements.) Then, there is the development of new lands

and resources, and such improvements as will benefit and safeguard the public.

Beyond these, there are many measures that would prove beneficial, among which may be mentioned an "old age pension."

Such a pension should be applicable to all persons over a certain age, irrespective of their financial standing; thereby removing any taint of charity or encouragement of improvidence. It need not be sufficient to keep a person in comfort; but it should be enough so that no person that is past the years of his usefulness would be obliged to take the "gas route" for the lack of three meals per day and a bed to sleep in.

With the new system in operation, we shall have a more intelligent electorate—a citizenry that will take a far greater interest in governmental affairs—and, consequently, a more efficient government in all its various branches.

And if, through economical management, such a "calamitous" condition should ever obtain that Uncle Sam accumulates a large surplus in the treasury, there is always the "safety-valve" of declaring a dividend.

VOICE.

Do you think every one will be happy and satisfied in your Utopia?

Will we never try to get the best of one another—will we always consider others before ourselves?

Will it be, truly, in every-day practice, a sort of "after you, my dear Alphonse?"

Will there be no cheating, no stealing, no envy and no strife?

Will the "lion and the lamb lie down together," in the best of fellowship—and shall we, really, convert our "swords into plowshares?"

Shall we not all become a very common herd—monotonously alike—, all our aims centered upon ministering to our corporeal wants and convenience, with no patrons to encourage the higher arts and ideals?

Is it not necessary that the two extremes of poverty and wealth exist, in order to have an outlet for the highest genius of human endeavor?

Shall we not stagnate, become slothful and die?

THE ICONOCLAST.

Some people would kick even if most elaborately hung, and many will never be quiet and contented until six feet of sod is their portion.

No system can ever be devised that will make everyone happy and contented

But we can arrange for, and maintain, fundamental truth and justice; we can make our precepts fair dealings and high ideals; and we can make our practice conform with our teaching, if we will but cease trying to remedy a fundamental wrong through patching and cheap adjustments—go to the root of the whole matter and rectify the wrong.

For there can be no gainsaying that the most vital question, today, is—so far back as history goes, has been—and, in the future, will be: “What shall we eat—what shall we drink—and wherewithal shall we be clothed?”

The answer to this question holds our domestic, national and international relation; our moral and intellectual standard; our dealings with our fellow men; and our own conception of honesty and integrity. For we are the creatures of our environing conditions; and the economic condition shapes, molds and determines all the other conditions.

When society makes the basic conditions right and just, the individual will be the arbiter of his own destiny. If he tries honestly, he will receive his just desert, according to his individual capability; if he fails—society having dealt justly by him—, failure will be upon his own head.

It is for society, as a whole, to make the laws and conditions such that our individual tendency to get the better of one another cannot be carried too far.

We must, as society, protect ourselves against one another; for self interest is the first law of nature; but, advancing, we learn to cultivate fair dealing, for the sake of reciprocity. And, as a natural consequence of having a properly constructed foundation, we shall build up a society having an increasingly larger proportion of fair-dealing men and women; until, finally, only the abnormal will deviate from the rule.

When the majority of nations have arrived at this advanced stage of civilization, war will automatically cease, and we shall have, not coerced, but voluntary peace.

In regard to the ever present economic strife, it is problematical what place labor unions will occupy in the new order of things.

It is evident that they will not function along the present lines of arbitrary demands of one class as against another. For, since classes have been levelled, and we must all start at the foot, advancing by our own efforts and by the joint action of our co-workers, the function of labor organizations, if any, will be an equitable adjustment, taking the whole economic problem into consideration. For as there is a balance to be maintained between the producer and the consumer—which is, in truth, only the balance between different branches of producers—so, also, is there an equally important balance between those who organize production and those who execute it. And unless due regard is given to all the various branches in any adjustment, friction and strife will result.

If we had a man-ape of sufficient intelligence to perform the manual labor, unlimited resources, and a limited population—with all the children of men as masters—, there would be no serious objection to try to outdistance one another in vain-glorious splendor. But, even then, envy would probably set to work and develop friction, lying diplomacy and war. In spite of the fact that we all lived in independent abundance,

we would plunder and carry off one-another's monkeys and goods, just for pastime and to win the admiration of our ladies.

But since the economic conditions dictate that we can not have palaces without also having hovels; that we cannot have segregated, enormous wealth without also having abject poverty; that, in order to build pyramids, we must also have slavery, it becomes humanity's duty, to itself, to dispense with these luxuries.

Perhaps we shall not have so many of the superfluous luxuries—and it is doubtful that the great majority of people will miss them—but we shall have a greater abundance of the necessities and conveniences. And this, in turn, will give a larger field for industry, as well as that very much imposing, and imposed upon, genius.

We shall also find that work is not incompatible with good taste, high ideals and true refinement.

Indeed, we shall not stagnate or become slothful; for with room enough, not only at the top but all over the structure, it will be every man's ambition to climb; and then, fall off—requiting the law of nature.

Let there be light
from every angle,
without fear
or favor.

PUTTING A METER ON YOUR WINDPIPE

The following intrusive speeches, interspersed by the psychophone among the subject-matter of the preceding pages, have been grouped and added as supplementary, in order to leave the argumentative portion in a more coherent form.

* * * *

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r-r-r And, as the little black cloud kept descending, we noticed that it appeared as if surcharged with electricity. But there was no flash of lightning. It had the aspect of a ball or spheroid of some mysterious livid force which seemed ever trying to release itself, but through some superior law was held, confined to its proper circuit. As it came nearer and nearer, the most wonderfully enchanting music that human ears had ever listened to was heard issuing from this magic circle.

Finally it hovered right over the heads of the multitude which stood bewitched with awe as a heavenly messenger, in an angel's shape and of such exquisitely modulated brilliancy of colors that mortal eyes could look upon him, came forth from the celestial conveyance and spreading his wings glided to the platform and laid upon the table a large square letter. The messenger as swiftly returned to the concealing density of the cloud which immediately lifted

and continued rising until, in a very short time, it disappeared from view.

All eyes now centered upon the mayor where he stood, spellbound, his fascinated gaze riveted upon the letter, reading the portentous superscription: "To The Denizens of Impuesto." With trembling hands he reached for and unfolded it, while an even deeper hush settled upon the breathlessly waiting populace.

He read the letter in silence and, as he finished reading, it dropped fluttering to the floor.

His face was blanched with horror and unutterable despair, he tottered and would have fallen but for the timely assistance of his friends who helped him to a seat. At last, anxious to relieve the agonizing suspense of his fellow citizens, he arose and, in a quaking voice, told them the contents of the letter.

It was a message from The Creator announcing that, when the earth had made three hundred revolutions more around its axle, all the oxygen would be shut off and gradually separated from the atmospheric air in, and around, the neighborhood of the city of Impuesto.

When the awful news had spread throughout the city and been discussed, pro and con, in all its various phases and bearings upon the destiny of the community, the full realization of the impending calamity brought home to every one a feeling of hopeless dejection.

One could tell by the drawn, set faces, the awed whispers, the cowed, humble behavior of the people, that something extraordinary had occurred.

The sun shone as usual, the air was as sweet, the birds sang and the roses gave forth their fragrance. Everything appeared to be as formerly and no perceptible difference could be discerned.

Nothing had changed but the manners of the people. They were no longer eager, blithesome or talkative. A mysterious dread had crept into their lives. The things that previously interested them, and seemed so momentously weighty, were no longer held in esteem. Pleasure and amusement had lost all attraction, and those who went about their business did so in an indifferent sort of way. Every one considered only how to get away, where to go, and how much could be saved out of the chaos.

This mode of living continued for some time, until, one morning, two men entered the mayor's office.

One of these was the city's most prominent banker, capitalist and property owner. The other, a man about forty years old, of vigorous manhood and decisive in all his movements, was introduced to the mayor as Mr. Youngshoe.

Mr. Youngshoe opened the conversation by reviewing the well known situation of the city, dwelling deplorably upon the immense prospective loss in property, business and industry. He finally intimated that he had come to offer a remedy and confer with the mayor upon a business proposition which, if satisfactory terms could be arrived at, would wholly obviate the necessity of the removal of the inhabitants and save the incalculable wealth of the city.

Enlarging upon the scheme, Mr. Youngshoe went on to explain that he had located and obtained title to inexhaustible banks of concentrated oxygen in the adjoining county. This could be piped and, by means of numerous substation atomizers, utilized for impregnating the atmosphere of the city of Impuesto, in the proper ratio, making the air even better than at present.

The banker now joined in the conversation to inform the mayor that a company was being organized which would have the backing of unlimited capital, for the control and execution of the project. He also hinted that there would be no objection to the mayor "coming in" for a few shares on the "ground floor."

After discussing matters further, in a general way, it was agreed to charter a tugboat and visit the property, which was located some distance up the coast, taking along competent experts, so that a thorough examination could be made to determine the feasibility of the undertaking.

It was not long before the joyous news had spread all over the city.

Reporters besieged the office of the mayor, who preserved a noncommittal attitude and referred all inquirers to the banker and to Mr. Youngshoe.

These gentlemen were more than willing to be interviewed, with the result that extras soon appeared on the streets, which were eagerly bought and read with the greatest gusto.

These gave a glowing description of the proposed enterprise, assuring the people of its entire feasibility and exhorting every one to abandon all thoughts of departure, apply themselves to their vocations and rejoice, for the city was saved.

Never had a quicker or greater change occurred in the temper of any people. From utter despair, it rose to a frenzy of jubilation. By common impulse, all care was forgotten. Parades and torchlight processions were inaugurated—the people joining spontaneously in anything suggested—, the mad revel keeping up day and night.

Mr. Youngshoe was hailed as the savior of the city and adulation accorded him in every conceivable way. He was feted, champagned and banquetted, mass-meetings were held, speeches made, and his virtues and fine qualities lauded to high heaven. The people escorted him wherever he went, spreading valuable carpets and draperies in his path and, upon occasion, even carrying him on their shoulders; he was worshipped almost like a god.

Some days later another conference was held; this time not in the mayor's office, but in the sumptuously appointed offices of the newly organized company.

The president, Mr. Youngshoe, wished to confer with the mayor anent the definite terms which the company would submit to the city council, and probably also to the public, at a special election, for approval.

After reading and familiarizing himself with all the facts and figures of the different documents to be

submitted, the mayor sat for a long time in silence—thinking—considering—cogitating.

Finally, looking straight at Mr. Youngshoe, he said: "Your rate of charges and demands seem to be based upon the simple fact that you have every inhabitant—every man, woman and child—in this city literally by the throat.

"Your estimate for the building and installation of the pipe-line, machinery and equipment, while high, may pass. But the valuation of the oxygen banks—what do you base that upon?"

Mr. Youngshoe answered: "Permit me to call your attention to a trifling matter which you evidently have overlooked, Mr. Mayor.

"The simple fact that without my banks of oxygen your city with its numerous valuable corner lots, beautiful streets and magnificent public and private buildings; street-car, telephone, gas, water and sewage systems; factories and business houses; your splendid harbor—all is worthless. It hasn't even the value of junk, for you cannot remove it.

"Now then! is it unreasonable to premise that my oxygen banks are worth as much as the total valuation of the city?

"I think not. For, firstly: an equally good site, with harbor facility, cannot be found.

"Secondly: if it could be found, the ground value would immediately soar; and your people, after sustaining a total loss here, would find themselves unable to buy and build, certainly not in the substantial way that this city is constructed.

"And, thirdly: think of the annoyance, delay and consequent loss of business; whereas here everything would go right on, smoothly.

"And the company is not asking the people to pay this sum. It is merely requesting to be guaranteed a fair rate of interest upon this valuation so long as it delivers the goods.

"Nothing extravagant at all, Mr. Mayor; the proposition is very fair and reasonable."

"But, Mr. Youngshoe," rejoined the mayor, "you seem to have forgotten that there is an equitable side to this matter.

"I do not deny that you are entitled to reward and great compensation for your service to this community. But why make the franchise perpetual?

"You say: 'That is for our protection, as well'—so the company cannot sell out to other communities, that may be similarly situated.

"You know, as well as I do, Mr. Youngshoe, that these oxygen banks were formed by the oxygen that was withdrawn from a large area in the desert country. And the probability is that the very oxygen from the atmosphere of Impuesto will go to enrich these banks, at the order of The Creator, who has not delegated to any one the right to charge toll or tribute for the use of it.

"You refuse to sell at any reasonable figure. And, when I suggest going into court to condemn your property as a public utility, you protest that you have acquired it according to the laws of society and that we have no right to confiscate and rob you of part of

its value—which you insist is the full, total valuation of the city.

“But I speak to you now as man to man. You made this discovery when we were all condemned to an utter loss. You proffered the remedy; but—remember—you did not make the remedy. It was placed there by The Creator, and sooner or later some one would have discovered and found the means of utilizing it. Therefore we are indebted to you, not as to God who owns that element in perpetuity, but as to a fellow-man who has rendered great service.

“You wish to pass this monopoly on to your children and children’s children. But your children did not render this service. We are indebted to you—but not to your children. We will pay you toll, so long as you live—but not forever. For death cancels all your rights—all your contracts—and all your agreements.”

And then I woke up. I arose, put my head out of the window and gazing up at the stars I drew a long, deep breath, while sighing: “Thank God, there is at least one thing they cannot tax us for. Oh! if brr-rr-rr-r.”

OLD MAN NOAH'S "SHOES"

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrrr-rrr-r-r For months the archaeologists explored and excavated the ground in the neighborhood, finding many fragments, some that proved of no historical value, but many were pieced together and aided greatly in elucidating and giving a fairly clear conception of the state of society, its customs and laws, in that primeval period. Of course, the most interesting finds made are the two large tablets.

The one found intact is a most curiously embellished monument, and proves conclusively that old man Noah was a person who believed in "safety first" and did not carelessly leave anything to chance. Possibly, his nautical experience had had a tendency to still more develop and strengthen this idiosyncrasy of his character. For although he was the head of the family that emerged from the ark and it was a self-evident fact that all mankind, with the exception of themselves, had perished, he, nevertheless, laboriously inscribed and erected this large monolith.

The inscription itself, in common with those of the other tablets, while couched in primitive phraseology, is yet of such fundamental clearness, brevity and simplicity—coupled with the happy faculty of covering everything in sight—that it may well be emulated by our contemporary disciples of Blackstone.

To give a free translation: It announces to all beings under the heavens—whether on land, or water, or in the water—that the subscriber, Father Noah, is the rightful and only owner of everything on earth, of whatsoever nature, upon which the sun gives light by day and the moon and stars by night.

To have and to hold, and to bequeath to whosoever he chooses; and to remain in that chosen line of descent until the end of time—so long as the sun, moon and stars give and reflect light upon the earth.

Underneath appears the name of Father Noah, witnessed by his three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

A footnote manifests that all the male animals—that had been in the ark, and representing every specie—had been led before it; all being silent, except a chattering monkey and the lion, which roared most vociferously.

The time is given as being two years after the exit from the ark.

Evidently, Father Noah occupied himself as a husbandman on the slopes of these mountains. And this little plateau must have been near, if not the actual place, where the ark stranded; for the locality had been hallowed through some momentous event and therefore dignified to be the archive of society of that era.

The second large tablet, while unfortunately split in two parts—undoubtedly by the immense boulder which had been deposited upon it through some earthquake or cataclysm—is, nevertheless, in fairly good state of preservation; and the celebrated Archaeolo-

gist, Professor Altenschrift, assured me there was not the slightest trouble in deciphering the full text.

Ladies and gentlemen! This split tablet is, unquestionably, the most important and far reaching prehistoric find that has ever been made in the world's history. Its consequences may extend to and affect the lives and well-being of this very audience, as well as that of every man, woman and child living on the earth today.

The inscription of this tablet, duly signed, witnessed and recorded, according to the customary formalities of that day, is nothing more or less than the last will and testament of Father Noah. Giving and bequeathing unto his beloved first-born son Shem and his descendants, in a direct lineal line, to have and to hold forever or so long as men live and draw breath, everything that Noah possessed, without any exception or reservation, whatsoever.

That Japheth and his descendants should have the right to use any part or territory agreeable, in consideration of annual payments of rental of one-tenth of everything produced; but the title and ownership should always vest and remain in Shem and his descendants.

That Ham and his descendants should never be given access to the land or resources under any consideration, but should ever remain the servitors of the two brothers and their descendants and depend upon their good will for their living. And this should also apply to any other children that Noah may have.

It is most significant how the early bible history bears out the truth and obvious legality of these tablets. In Genesis, ninth chapter—twenty-fifth, twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh verses—we read: “And he said, Cursed be Canaan: A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.

“And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; And Canaan shall be his servant.

“God shall enlarge Japheth and *he shall dwell in the tents of Shem*; And Canaan shall be his servant.”

As we all know, Canaan was the son of Ham. And while it is apparent that love and hate had their innings in the making of this will—just as they have played their role in the framing of every will since—Noah was, obviously, not guided wholly by enmity, but rather by a desire to preserve and strengthen the patriarchal form of organization, and the wish to hold this nucleus of humanity together as one large family with natural subdivisions, duties and privileges, according to caste.

This, also, was the motive when they began to build the city and tower of Babel.

The descendants of Shem were growing prosperous and wealthy, hence they wished to build a capital city, with warehouses, storerooms and a large, high tower, from which place they intended to dominate the earth.

The fragmentary tablets tell us that even previously to the beginning of this construction there had been a great deal of friction. More and more the descendants of Shem gave themselves up to idleness and pleasure, leaving not only the actual production but

all enterprise and all planning of new undertakings in the hands of the descendants of Japheth and Ham. Explorations and new developments were inaugurated by the descendants of Japheth, who impressed the descendants of Ham in the performance of the heavier tasks and drudgery.

This was a source of constant irritation.

The descendants of Ham, while obeying the patriarchal injunction and rendering service—many doing so blindly, without thinking or questioning the why or wherefore of it—yet, subconsciously, chafed under an indefinable sense of injustice which they, themselves, could not have explained.

Some there were of rebellious spirit, as the future mighty Nimrod, who, when the yoke and his craving for freedom clashed, would sneak off on a hunting expedition.

“Why toil, making bricks and mixing mortar, to build palaces for these drones, while I must sleep in a hovel, like a dog, and feed upon the scraps and leavings they choose to throw me?”

“Not I,” quoth hunter Nimrod, bold.

“Is not the balmy air of these old hills better than the baking heat of noonday Babel?”

“No hovel here! I make my nidus in the forked branches of the sycamore—the eagle’s lodge cannot compare.

“Those noisome scraps! The stench is in my nostrils. Why think of it?”

"Have I not venison, mountain goat, wild fruit, honey, and all the birds of paradise? Enough! Yea, more than enough to glut a gormand of a patriarch.

"Ah! These patriarchs—and their brood! But hold! I fear not the wildest lion in the desert. Why fear them?

"Some day I shall return—and face them—demand the freedom of my brethren.

"Lo! These many years they have toiled—like asses, not knowing that the earth is large and fruitful and will yield forth the tenfold substance of their labor.

"Now, let the brood shed their longflowing silk and satin robes. Go forth into the fields and labor—with their own hands—like men. And earn their living in the sweat of their fair brows. For such was God's command—which old man Noah tried to circumvent.

"We have perverted the first principle of God's edict! The curse was meant for all alike—not double beads upon my brow, to keep them from my neighbor's.

"Which is of greatest worth and strength—God's word or Noah's?

Oh, what fools!"

And these Japhethites! They do submit and pay the tribute year by year. Yet, knowing well that silence guards an endless stretch of fertile land beyond the everlasting hills—on both sides of the water deep it still continues.

"Why then the toll—one-tenth of all their gain? They love it not. And who would force them?

"Not we.

"The Shemites—in flowing purple?

"Ha-ha-ha! Let every jackass bray, and all the serpents smile.

"They fret, grumble and complain. But still, they pay—and yet, they are no fools.

"Wait!

"He is gone.

"An imp just whispered me.

"It must be so—and yet, I cannot see it clearly. But these imps—they know.

"Should the Japhethites rebel—refuse to pay the tribute—what hinder that we all rebel and break the charmed circle?

"The Hamites—what have they to lose? What haven't they to gain?

"The Japhethites have some to win and some to lose—therefore they hesitate.

"And yet—some day—who knows?

"One night I heard the Scribe—that wise old man who studies figures, triangles, circles, laws and old traditions.

"He told the headman of the clay-pit—where we dug out the bricks—there was a flaw in old-man Noah's will. Or was it in the tablet which he did first erect?

"It seems, so anxious was he in making sure of getting all, he overreached himself. For this is what the wise man said: 'The sun, nor moon, nor stars doth

shine upon this clay, being underground. Nor on the iron ore, copper, silver in the vein, or gold where you may find it.' "

By what we can glean from a study of these fragmentary tablets, as well as from the early bible history, the thoughtful minds of the different stratas of society were, apparently, busy studying the economic problem; but generally only from the viewpoint of their own class. They all seem to have instinctively realized that matters could not continue along those lines—that they were approaching a point where the different classes would test out their relative strength. The building of the city and tower of Babel was a move by the Shemites to solidify and fortify themselves as the ruling class. They did not disdain using religion as a medium for strengthening their position; their intention, or pretension, being to build the tower high enough to reach to heaven, thereby impressing upon the other classes that they were especially favored by The Creator and in direct communication with Him.

Since the Japhethites, because of their economic situation, developed by far the greatest number of intelligent persons, they must have been the first—unless, indeed, it was the Shemites themselves—to perceive the "presumed" injustice of the will of Noah, and also how easily it could be nullified; but, fearing that in the readjustment they would lose their privilege of exploiting the Hamites, they seem to have been content to let matters drift.

Thus, the movement of inaugurating the new system was initiated by the laboring class, grown desperate through imposition and oppression; and we find Nimrod returning to Babel to lead a revolt against the, so-called, parasites. Being hailed as liberator by his clansmen, he gave them a taste of a new form of oppression by making himself master and king, using as foundation for his kingdom the conquered Babel.

The revolution, once begun, extended to all the different localities. The Shemites being ousted, the country was divided between the different factions, irrespective of caste.

Genesis, tenth chapter and twenty-fifth verse, mentions one "Peleg: for, in his days, the earth was divided."

Force being in the saddle, powerful leaders arose, each one with his group of henchmen—bending the common people to their will; making war upon and subjugating neighboring communities; dictating and ruling according to their own sweet will, until they, in turn, were conquered by some more powerful chieftain.

The Shemites, having enjoyed a period of artificial prosperity, found themselves, in the hour of adversity, unable to hold their own or to successfully cope with the new order of things.

Thus we find Abraham, a direct descendant of Shem, a roaming nomad, without a country of his own. Where his ancestors had ruled as masters and owners, he did not even possess enough ground for a

burial place, but had to condescend to buy it from the descendants of those who had robbed him of his birthright.

But the days of barbarism are passed; the days when might and force triumphed over right and justice have been superseded by an advanced civilization whose sense of justice is symbolized by a blind goddess, dispensing it without fear, grudge or favor.

Knowing this, and to the end that truth and justice may prevail and the dispossessed again come into their own, since this timely discovery has revealed who they are, a number of wealthy Jewish gentlemen have organized a syndicate which has gathered all the available data bearing upon the case.

Having perfected their organization and retained the cream of the legal talent in such profuse abundance that there will be very little left for the opposition—and such as there is they will be entirely welcome to—, they are now “almost” ready to proceed to give battle royal, according to legal lore, in all civilized countries of the world.

Of course, this will cost immensely large sums of money, being the biggest lawsuits any one has ever engaged in, but all the Jewish wealth in the world—and that means a very large percentage of the accumulated earnings of the different nations—will finance it.

And the prize will be worth all it may cost—to dispossess the present holders of the earth, wheresoever and in whatever degree of possession they may be

found, and restore it to its rightful heirs, the Jewish race, in accordance with the last will and testament of Father Noah, properly executed and recorded in conformity with the customs of society of that period. Every title, every deed, every grant ever made and given by any man or government is null and void, since it was based upon and made possible by the overt act, force and injustice resorted to by the descendants of the two youngest sons of Noah.

We are often moved to pity and compassion—to deplore the miscarriage of justice, and even to a feeling of resentment, when our attention is called to some case where children have been defrauded out of a comfortable fortune and not only compelled to earn their own living but actually abused and tormented by those enjoying the wealth which rightfully belongs to their victims.

But consider this persecuted people, deprived, not of paltry fortune, but of the whole earth with all its untold wealth of resources, not for a few years or for the length of a mere lifetime, but for ages and ages, during which time they were being driven from pillar to post, starved, beaten and hounded about, as no other people ever has been hounded—their tormentors feasting and indulging in riotous living and, while the helpless dupes looked on, dividing between themselves their illgotten spoil.

Stripped of their heritage, they drifted about, picking a living as best they could, until enslaved by a faction of their spoilers,

Freeing themselves from the yoke of slavery, they had to follow the example of their oppressors and resort to force in order to regain an insignificant fraction of the earth—the lost estate, which was rightfully theirs by every law of God and man.

Having learned that right must be protected by might, they, in common with the other nations, resorted to arms for their own protection. Their enjoyment of any part of the earth was no longer a matter of right, but depended upon the fortunes of war. And after many vicissitudes, including temporary captivity, depriving them for the time being of the possession of their little strip of country, they were finally ousted altogether—driven forth and scattered throughout every land of their lost domain.

But “truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again.” This long-suffering, patient people, who, in many lands, have been despised as the scum of the earth, will no longer be exposed to contempt, ridicule and oppression, for theirs is the earth and everything therein. From the lowest, they shall be exalted to the highest. From being servants, menials and slaves, they shall be masters, owners and possessors.

They shall impose, not tributes and taxes, but ground rents, royalties, tenement and leasehold dues. Everything that any one possesses in the form of money or personal property must be turned over to reimburse them for the cost of litigation and, in a measure, repay them for the loss of revenue during the ages they have been by force deprived of the enjoyment of the estate of their ancestors.

We hear a great deal about labor and its, pretended, rights and privileges—how it produces all wealth, and therefore is entitled to the enjoyment of all.

But it is not so; for it did not produce the earth or its raw materials. It was already here when labor arrived, and belongs to its rightful, legal owners; by the sufferance of whom labor exists and is maintained. Labor (and the administration of labor, in conjunction with their different governments) has consumed far more than it was entitled to during these many ages—for, behold! the rightful owners have received nothing.

Therefore, the producers, as they call themselves, have eaten not only their own share, but also the share which should have been paid to the owners; and the remainder, which they have not quite succeeded in consuming, but still possess in the form of money, jewelry, machinery, houses, personal property, or improvements of any kind, will be absorbed in the attempt to repay the unpaid tenth which has accumulated during the ages.

The syndicate does not ignore the possibility of failure in the courts, which are largely controlled by gentiles, and the consequent necessity of resorting to force. With such a contingency in view, the whole matter will be laid before "Kaiser Wilhelm,"* who as a direct descendant of the "House of David" and the recognized champion of the weak and downtrodden,

*Written in 1916.

will not fail to espouse such a just and humane cause and with all the power at his command lead the righteous host to victory against the rapacious population of the earth.

It is unquestionable but this will cause a lot of
brrr-rrr-rr-r-

HAPPY DAYS IN THE MOON

INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Brrr-rr-r- Yes, indeed! I have been reincarnated many, many different times.

Owing to my strict ascetic life, during a number of the most recent incarnations, it has been given me to remember some of these existences quite distinctly.

But there is one especially, which, so far as my knowledge goes, is my first entry among the living. It is not of this planet, but previously to any of my earthly incarnations; and it is only after due preparation of fasting and the subjugation of my mind to a quiescent state, bordering almost on coma, that I, at full moon and exposed to its magic rays, have a glimpse beyond the curtain of oblivion.

At such times, the moon is to me as an open book and I can read the last chapter of human existence upon that extinct planet.

It seems that the transition had been at work for ages, gradually cooling and rendering uninhabitable all but the very central part, towards which humanity crowded, unrelentingly competing with one another for the means of sustenance.

Naturally, the original inhabitants of this section resented the invasion, with the exception of a limited number, who were the owners of the tillable land, and,

also, the owners of the cheese mines. These were secretly rejoicing, because of the greatly enhanced value of their possessions, and the fact that labor was now at their mercy, outbidding one another in order to obtain the means of prolonging their miserable lives.

In this manner things continued, very nicely and smoothly, for a long period. Whenever the hordes of labor showed signs of rebellion, the mere threat of being thrust and driven out into the cold and forbidding region would quieten and make them meek, willing and even anxious to continue under the prevalent conditions.

The owning class were very prosperous, almost too much so, in fact, for the birth rate among them was very low; and as time passed, many of the leading families died out, and all the property concentrated into the hands of a few surviving groups.

This state of affairs is borne in upon me as existing at the time of my first incarnation, and there comes over me a realization of a feeling of gloom and mental depression predominant in the lower classes. The reason for this feeling was based upon the fear that the proprietary class might die out, leaving the hordes of working people, who raised large families and whose chief decimating disease was starvation, without any one to give them employment.

This would appear to our earthly minds as being a splendid solution of the problem, for then the working class could seize and administer the resources for their own benefit, without having to yield a large share of

the result of their labor to the idle proprietor-class. But in order to properly understand this matter we must look at it from a moonly point of view.

It is currently supposed that the moon is composed almost exclusively of cheese; but nothing could be further from the truth. There is an abundance of cheese—it is true—, but it occurs in veins, and must be mined in order to be available for consumption.

Not only that, but after being mined it was the rankest kind of poison unless the stamp of approval was placed upon it by its legal owner.

And, while certain kinds of cryptogamias abounded, the only comestible vegetable suitable for cultivation on the tillable land was a large, black bean.

Now this bean had a peculiarity, somewhat resembling that of the Mexican jumping-bean. Should a laborer in the field feel hungry and wish to gratify his appetite, surreptitiously, out of the abundant harvest, before he could convey a spoonful of beans to his mouth they would all jump out and, metaphorically, decline to enter his cheesbeanchest.

This was owing to the fact that, according to ancient mythology, all beans had been cursed and could not be eaten unless first blessed by the owner, who must never permit a drop of sweat to exude from his brow.

Thus we see how it became a most important duty for the lower classes to perform all labor; for should perspiration, due to honest work, ever rise upon the brow of any of the proprietary class, his charm would

be broken, and the beans grown upon his land and the cheese coming out of his mine would be unfit for food.

And this explains why the lower classes feared and dreaded the possible extinction of the proprietary class. It was not a matter of love and good will, but merely a question of self-preservation.

Therefore, when I entered moonly society, as the only son of the most prominent family, possessing mountain-top vistas of fertile bean fields and numerous rich cheese mines, my advent was hailed with joy and jubilation by high and low.

A new, gracious master had arrived, and the glad tidings were spread far and wide. Towns and villages were decorated with banners, lichens and ferns, while the people were given three long holidays and an extra allowance of cheese and beans, with the "kick" extracted.

Oh, those were glorious days!

When my nurse appeared with me in the open, the people would rush forward, fall upon their knees, and beg for the privilege of kissing the hem of my swaddling-clothes, while they all shouted: "Long live our master, the new Cheese-Baron." However, there was some division on this point, for a great many of them wished to call me the new "Bean-Count;" but, I learned later, that was thickly veiled sarcasm, because of my father's custom of having their beans counted, and, due to dishonest stewards, counted short.

As a boy, I mingled freely with the different classes, even with the lowest, beloved by all—for wasn't I their master?

I say "different classes," advisedly, for many had worked their way up and occupied positions of responsibility and had charge of the planning and transaction of business, while serving as an intermediary between the masters and the producing class.

It is strange how, even as a child, my superior intelligence was recognized—how I was deferred to and begged for advice upon many subjects, by people of mature age and vastly more actual experience; for I, at the time, had none. But it serves to illustrate that blood counts, and that, when your William Shakespeare asked: "What's in a name," he did not know what he was talking about.

Quickly the happy, innocent years of childhood slipped by and I found myself a young man—I may say, "a Prince Fortunato;" for, with my fortune and secure position in the select society of the moon, I could, without any exception, have my choice of the fairest of the moonstruck maidens.

Lingeringly I fluttered from fungus to fungus, sipping the saccharine dew, while the magic spell of spring was upon me, in the shady dells of the moon.

My heart was lost between the fairest of moonbeams, the green-haired, purple-eyed Lunita, and the elfishly dancing queen of the Crescent mossfields.

Joyously we strolled upon the sand of time,
Where mortal feet nevermore shall walk;
When sweetest dreams of silv'ry wedding-bell's
chime
Were cruelly spoiled with plain business talk.

"I have a match arranged for you with the only daughter of the noble House of Moonshine. She will be exceedingly wealthy, for her father controls the monopoly of manufacturing and preparing the 'Sky Blue Brand' of evaporated cheese and compressed beans. You have my blessings, my boy; we shall soon be in the dog-days, and you are a lucky one."

With memories of hours we spent
Upon that moonly beach,
My true love's plea, at all events,
In pain did I beseech.

Quoth he: "Upon my honor bright,
Love's game you fain may play;
Secure but legal issue's right:
Wild oats? Just seed away."

Having, up to this time, lived a chivalric life of dreams and romance, marrying into the Moonshine family seems to have thoroughly disillusioned me.

Shortly after the event, which was celebrated with much pomp and eclat, it dawned upon me that while marriage may be the pinnacle of love's desiderata it is too stale and somnolent on the one hand, and too chafingly confining on the other, for a person of dash and spirit.

From this time on, I made it my motto: to take what I wanted while the taking was good; and many a gallant adventure served as spice for these happy days.

My wife soon took the cue, and being by nature and education, like myself, very liberal and broad-minded, in place of disagreeable unpleasantness, which is generally engendered because of plebian jealousy, she plunged boldly into the social whirl and very soon was racing me for the best time.

Of course, our home life was all it should be and, because of our liberal views, very decorous, and, therefore, dull.

But come with me into the sylvan glens, where the gilded youths and the most beautiful maidens were my companions and where the lunar nectar and sparkling ambrosia flowed freely, and you would see such dances, sport and pleasure as would make those of earth seem tame and insipid.

As the memory of my soul drifts back through the eons of time, I gauge the chasm of difference in economic situation between the cheap aristocracy of the earth and the nobly conditioned proprietary class of primordial moon.

As the gods and sons of gods of our various mythologies, whose privilege it was to visit the daughters of men, were we; for behold, all the beautiful daughters of the inferior classes held it the greatest honor to bask in our smiles.

Once—only once, did a foolish father object and show resentment, but condign retribution swiftly overtook him. I think he must have been insane, or at least temporarily out of his mind, for he tried to assassinate me, growling, the while, that I hadn't treated his daughter fairly.

But I escaped him; and the highly incensed populace fell upon and torturing him slowly, not only made him acknowledge himself in the wrong but begged me to also take his other daughter, if I would only settle upon the two "regular rations of beans and cheese." But, if he meant it as a peace offering, it was too late; for the enraged people swore to make him an example, and finally, tiring of tormenting, gave him some of the unapproved cheese to eat, which quickly put him out of his misery.

"What," spoke a young woman of the mob, "is the harm in it?

"His Grace has several children in this neighborhood—are they not healthy and strong, or better taken care of than our own children? And do not the mothers receive their rations regularly, while we have to work for ours?

"Think of the pleasures and good times those girls have had.

"While we had to work in the fields, dressed in our coarse, homespun, beanstalk-fiber dresses, they were seeing the world, dressed in the ultra fashionable, iridescent cobweb-silk, gathered and prepared at enormous expense.

"Pshaw! This man made me weary.

"I would have given my soul to be able to charm 'His Grace' or any of these handsome, sweatless gentlemen, who have such an abundant superfluity of this moon's goods.

"There goes my sister with our ration of cheese—laboring and drudging from early morn' till night to earn it, and, married or single, nothing better in view so long as we live, perhaps worse if we have bad luck.

"Just tempt us to spend the season at the fashionable watering-place—with servants to wait upon us; delicious mushrooms, snails, froglegs and maggot-pie to eat—and all those wonderful dishes that their magician chef turns out; canoeing on the great tidal canal; strolls along its fern-clad banks, in the best of society—I tell you, it's a dream. Just tempt us to shed our coarse garments, to don a soft, beautiful gown that it has taken a dozen people a year to gather material for—and the beautiful silver rings and bracelets—and the beautiful sparkling gems—you know where they get them?

"Last year the master sent one hundred men out into the forbidden land to gather them—only half of the men returned, with a few gems, the others perished. You see what they cost?

"A girl would be a lunatical fool to miss such a chance of soft living because of the neighbors' hide-bound narrow-mindedness.

"I bet you, it's nothing but jealousy—jealousy! that's what it is."

What this young woman said impressed itself upon my memory very deeply, because it showed the underlying aspiration among the women of her class.

Being effectively excluded from all legitimate opportunities of gratifying their natural craving for the beautiful, and having this craving augmented by observing the dainty elegance of the haughty ladies of our set, it became their abiding ambition to escape the narrow confines of their own class.

With this in view, they lent a willing ear and by every means facilitated our advances; and the fact that some members of our class had formed mesalliances and married beneath their station, served to delude them with false hopes and give an air of apparent respectability to the initial stages of the procedure.

I do not mean to insinuate that they, as a class, were devoid of virtue, or lacking in the knowledge or sense of right and wrong-doing. Far from it. On the contrary, many surrounded themselves with an air of high-minded simplicity, through which it required the greatest ingenuity to penetrate. But these were mostly the plain or uninteresting ones, whom we willingly left to become old maids or to marry the men of their own class.

With the pretty ones, who had character, the game became very interesting—really, what one may term royal sport. And to many of these it became necessary to make the most solemn promises—for with some nothing would avail but the assurance, upon my honor, to sue for divorce and give them the protection of

marriage as soon as convenient. But in remote districts I passed as being single, which greatly simplified matters.

Oh, those were glorious days! But, alas, even I found my "Waterloo."

It happened during an autumnal festivity of propitiation to the evil "genie" of the earth, who sometimes, when angry, came between us and our master, the god of the sun.

She was the daughter of a priest of the temple of the sun, just budding into glorious womanhood; her divine beauty being of such unparalleled type that it seemed almost unmoonly.

The moment our eyes met I knew, instinctively, that I had found my true affinity—and all that had gone before was only the sport of an idle mind.

But here I encountered a new obstacle. Her character and intelligence was of such high order that, knowing me to be married, she would not give me the slightest encouragement. Still worse, she avoided me—promises and proposals of what I would do were of no avail—she would not even listen to my pleadings.

But this did not serve to discourage me; quite the contrary. I no longer had any peace—I could not eat, drink or sleep—my whole life was centered upon the one ambition—to possess her—to make her mine, at any cost.

Hitherto, I had lived only for pleasure—to gratify my own whims and fancies. As if by magic, all this was changed. Something had come into my life which

seemed to lift me out of myself—to exalt and ennoble me, in spite of myself; for all that I formerly esteemed as pleasure was held trivial and of no value—I almost regretted it, and deplored that I hadn't met this divine being before.

How different my life might have been. But I would not waste the time in vain regrets; I would sacrifice everything to win her.

Already, I was feeling her influence for the better—she was subconsciously drawing me to her own high moral and intellectual plane.

Would she thrust me back into the darkness—my soul back, into the meshes of its own folly?

No, she couldn't! She was as good as she was beautiful, and her woman's soul would have pity and compassion. She would appreciate my sacrifice when I laid everything at her feet—when I came to her humbly, renouncing all and unqualifiedly placing myself into her hands to make or mar.

And, once married to her, what a heaven on moon my life would be. Perhaps we would have children—little cherubs to share and increase our happiness. Oh, but that goddess of grace and beauty! My life would be ruined—I could not live—without her.

I had an early conference with my wife; and, while I did not tell my true motive, I represented to her the futility and vacuity of our lives. We had no children; and perhaps she would like more freedom to work out her destiny—perhaps the matrimonial ties interfered with some yearning of her heart? Did the welling of

her soul's craving surge up against this, seemingly impassible, barrier, impotently longing for release, and yet not wishing to offend the feeling of the mate who had always been good and considerate to her?

If there was anything like this in her inmost heart, it would be my most sacred duty—not to say pleasure—to give her the release which would enable her soul to flutter forth from its cramped quarters—to broaden and expand—and to soar to heights otherwise unattainable.

Our property interests could be arranged in private—I would settle handsomely on her—and the plea of incompatibility would serve very well to obtain the legal decree.

While she did not evince any desire to obtain a divorce, she promised to take the matter under consideration; and there followed some hours of agonizing suspense, during which I pondered what steps to take in the event of my wife's refusal to entertain a favorable view of the proposal.

I knew that my wife (as well as I myself) had been guilty of numerous indiscretions; and the evidence could be gathered; or I could bide my time and procure directly conclusive evidence in the future. But not wishing to go to such extremes, it was with the greatest relief of mind I received my wife's assent.

The whole matter was very quickly and quietly arranged by our lawyers and the divorce granted while we were, and ever after continued, upon the best of friendly terms; and I will state right |here |that |al-

though my wife later married, and divorced, eleven different men of high station and attainment, it is evident, to my mind, that none of them approached or came so near being her ideal as I.

After obtaining my freedom, it was a full year of soul trying—I may say, probationary—suspense before my divine beauty finally consented to marry me.

In the course of events, three beautiful children came to bless our union, making my happiness complete; while I devoted myself to my family and the care and improvement of my properties.

But as always in human affairs, whether here on earth or in the moon, "Father Time" is busy, meddling—never content to leave happiness at its zenith.

What has at one period seemed heaven, the possession of which would fill our cup-of-desire to overflowing, pales upon our frail, craving egos. What at a distance appeared flawless, familiarity scrutinized—not realizing that celestial perfection was not for the moon—not realizing that being imperfect myself, although desiring, I could neither have known nor appreciated or enjoyed perfection. That perfection, if existing at any point in my circumscribed life, would have grated upon my sensibility—that the correlating conditions are the most happily satisfying.

Or was the change merely in my perspective?

Sometimes, she looked very beautiful; then, again, I noticed, the bloom was fading from cheeks; her eyes did not always have the deep sparkle of yore; her hair, after all, was just ordinary.

Or was it of the soul?

Her approach did not bring the thrill of former years; the sound of her voice did not find the same vibrating echo.

Was it all an illusion?

Was there nothing permanent in these matters?

Were only the material things permanent?

But no—I knew, from the history of our moon, that even these were slowly changing.

And while we and everything else were changing—since nothing was permanent, and, least of all, happiness—wasn't it better to humor every longing—to yield to every craving—to indulge our every desire—to sip the intoxicant while it was there and we able to sip?

I considered the many things I had missed while living this quiet life—the field of my former pleasures was beckoning to me—, with a little finesse I could have them both.

Little by little, clandestinely, I drifted back to my former life, and with its spice and excitement I found that, being free to enjoy the homelife whenever I chose, the monotony was eliminated and enjoyment was mine to the fullest extent.

I had about come to the conclusion that our individuality is the only thing that matters—that we must never surrender it, in the slightest degree, for any reason, or for any one; that when we follow the dictates and gratify the cravings of the individual ego to the utmost, we are getting our full measure out of life

—when an incident occurred which, unfortunately, terminated my moonly career.

Telling my wife that I would be absent for several days to look after some property in a remote section, I went to an island in the tidal lagoon, where I met, by appointment, the wife of one of my best friends, a prominent citizen.

The husband, becoming suspicious, followed; and surprising us, in his ungovernable rage, attacked me, swearing he would rid the moon of such a foul monster; he held my head underneath the surface of the lagoon until my soul left the body.

In our monastery, clustered high amidst the hills of my native land, I sometimes spend hours meditating upon the different aspects of my many reincarnations. And I WONDER—at the advantageous economic conditions, perfect for fostering and promoting carnal pleasures, which our proprietary class enjoyed during my first incarnation. And the question comes to me: what, then, should be man's highest aim while living—what should he strive to achieve?

Some say: "Man reaches his highest estate when he learns to brrr-rrr-rr-r-r-r-

OLD SATAN TURNS A TRICK

SEMI INTRUSIVE VOICE.

Permit me to give an excerpt from an old book that may have some bearing upon the subject under discussion.

Last year, it was my good fortune to examine a collection of ancient books and documents which had just been discovered in the sealed up alcove of a ruin that was formerly a private dwelling in the ancient city of Alexandria, Egypt. These had evidently been smuggled away and hidden during the pillage of the magnificent library of Alexandria, in the year 389 A. D.

Among these, one volume especially interested me greatly.

This was a mythical tale, describing a race of people of a deep-green color—their mode of living, industries, arts and customs—that inhabited the continent of Atlantis.

The second part of the book relates the story of the destruction of the continent through the selfish greed and rapacity of the property-holding class. The pivotal character in this legend is an old man by the name of Guaracha Er Strumpa.

I shall try to render it, from memory, as nearly correct as possible.

One warm afternoon when Mr. Strumpa had just finished enjoying his siesta on the spacious, shady portico which fronted towards the Pillars of Hercules, his negro Eunuch entered and announced a visitor.

"And who is this visitor, you vomitable offal? Why do you not bring me his name? It shall be your privilege to spend a most enjoyable evening on the tickling bench."

"Permit this crawling worm to kiss the smallest of your Benevolence's most fragrant toes; spit upon me, and I shall esteem it the greatest of boons. But the visitor ruled me with his sinister eye—telling me to run and announce the approach of 'a long time friend'—even here he comes. May I sink into the dust and never again raise my eyes towards the blue sky."

Mr. Strumpa and the visitor looked at one another, long and searchingly.

No sign of recognition was shown by Mr. Strumpa. But the visitor's face screwed up into a thousand little sardonic wrinkles, while he said: "Friend Guaracha! I have wandered over your broad, fertile meadows; I have viewed your woodland and streams; your castle is beautiful beyond compare—few are its equal along the shores of the inland sea, save those of royalty. You have grown prosperous, fat and sleek to such a degree that you no longer will recognize old friends.

"Well, that's the way of the world.

"Hold your temper! and tell me how you acquired your wealth?"

Mr. Strumpa could not utter a word. He only stared—stared as if he were seeing the devil.

“Come! tell me the truth,” urged the visitor. “There is nothing we value, down our way, like the truth; we have so little of it, ha, ha, ha,—you don’t appreciate the joke, ha, ha, ha.

“Truth must pass between us this afternoon, my dear Guaracha, and since you will not pass it to me, I shall pass it to you. Lies are, all, very well—in truth, the finest coinage there is between you, people, in this valley of Jemmer—I should know, for I am the coiner, ha, ha, ha. You don’t “get me,” do you? But I shall get you, presently.

“You try to pass as being respectable among these good people of the Jemmer. But the filthy lucre that paid for these broad acres—where did you get it—how did you make it?

“Why this silence? Are you ashamed of it?

“And I was quite proud of you as a partner, ha, ha, ha. You did not recognize me as your partner—your silent partner?

“Don’t you know, the ‘green slave traffic’ in Sir-nolkroy is more lucrative than ever?

“But I have younger partners now, who serve me well—almost as well as you did for nearly three hundred years.

“Oh, you did fine! I must give you credit for it; and thousands of girls are heading my way because of your able business head.

"Yes, I always did like you ; so, please, get ready and come with me—don't worry,—I'll give you a good, soft berth.

"You are not looking so well as formerly—a complete change will do you good. You need a different atmosphere—there is too much ozone here for a person of your age. What your constitution craves is sulphur—sulphur will be your making, ha, ha, ha."

With that he stroked his bushy hair, bringing into strong relief two prongs of horns on his forehead.

Seeing these, Mr. Strumpa turned a deathly, light green color, fell upon his knees and began to implore for mercy.

"At least, give me time to put my affairs in order and make a will. Dear 'Old Scratch,' he went on, pleading, "I must leave my property to someone and it will take time to arrange it, for I, really, do not know whom to leave it to. You see, I am a bachelor—with no children, an—d—"

"Ha, ha, ha," sneered 'Old Scratch,' "no children! That's a good one! Why don't you leave the truth between us? No children! Why didn't you marry, and legitimize some of them? Come now—tell me the truth—why did you not? That would have taken care of the property question."

"But, most gracious 'Scratch', "whimpered old Strumpa, "how could I? It was always business before everything else—and business and sentiments do not mix. I will admit, I met one or two I might

have married, but my customers were always clamoring—urging me to fill the orders—the demand was so great, you know; and, as I said before, I did not permit sentiment to interfere.

“Besides, how could I ever have trusted anyone? You know, the trusting qualities are not developed in our line of business; and so, naturally, it gets into the blood to distrust and think the worst of everyone we meet.

“Oh, it’s a rotten business!”

“Rotten?” questioned ‘Old Scratch’, “Finest business there is—and big money in it—trust me, I know. But never mind that now. This is my busy day—so, come—let us start at once.”

“Oh! but, most merciful ‘Scratch’, do not take me away from my palace,” supplicated old Strumpa; “from this beautiful property—which I love so dearly—and all the little comforts I enjoy here. I would miss them so much. Please, permit me to take at least a few of the most necessary belongings with me. Oh, let me take the palace—let me take the palace—and the servants! I feel sure, you have plenty of room for it.”

The horns on “Old Scratch’s” head dropped down even with his hair and the thousand sardonic wrinkles reappeared in his face, while he said: “It is strange that although you have associated with me all your life, now nearly three hundred years, the human traits—the craving for comfort and ease, and the insatiable desire for property, through which to secure it,—still remains dominant, even to the last breath.

"Do you know, you are a pretty shrewd old devil? And I love you for it. Just now, you put an idea into my head which is, in truth, magnificent, and tickles me so I can't keep my face straight—it is a wonder I never thought of it before.

"I am going to make you my chief 'Subscratch.'

"Here is the idea:

"If I felt sure the property would be held intact by someone who would grind down the people—make them slave early and late and allow them just enough to keep body and soul together until I had time to come around for them, while he spent the proceeds in our joyshops in Sirnolkroy—it would serve very well. But I fear the property may be cut up and subdivided among a lot of common people; and that would be the worst calamity that might happen.

"You know: poverty and riches—one extreme or the other, and especially one pitted against the other—is the finest equipped mill for grinding and preparing souls for my kingdom.

"How big tract of land have you here?"

"About fifty thousand acres," replied old Mr. Strumpa.

"Pshaw! we can slide it right onto the ferry and handle it in one trip; and there is a fine site for it along the bank of the big sulphur stream right in the middle of my kingdom."

"What do you mean? Take my property along? Oh, you adorable 'Old Scratch'!" exclaimed Mr.

Strumpa, almost overcome with emotion, "I will love you and serve you so long as there is a soul to be sulphurized.

"But I can't understand how the land can be moved—of course, it is mine; it has been deeded to me in perpetuity and I hold a clear, flawless title—but I thought it was a physical impossibility to move it."

"Rest easy! I will have billions of little 'Scratches' at work, boring themselves in a thousand feet underneath the surface, and if we encounter mineral we will go down deep enough to pull it out root and branch; then you will see the whole estate just crawl onto the ferry. You may stay right in the palace, and you will hardly be aware of the transition; only that, when we approach the nether regions, the atmosphere will be strongly impregnated with fumes which will eat into your carcass and, gradually, transform your peccable earthly form into a true sulphur saturated 'Scratchling'."

With that, he stepped to the edge of the portico and blew a long yellow flame through his left nostril, which instantly brought a multitude of his lieutenants into his presence, ready to do his bidding.

They were all very much of a type: having the human shape, but being tousy haired, with two short prongs of horns, wicked looking eyes, and each one moving about in a private halo of sulphureous atmosphere. One, standing a little apart from the others, almost suffocated inhaling some pure air when a

strong gust of wind for a moment drove the fumes back from his face.

"Old Scratch" now proceeded, in their own gibberish vernacular, to instruct his lieutenants, after which some scattered to direct the work of their countless subordinates; whom they could instantly summon, whenever and wherever they chose to do so.

Others started to run through the palace and the adjoining town. At this, Mr. Strumpa became very excited and began to imploringly beg "Old Scratch" to call them back. "For," he said, "they will alarm and put to flight my servants and the inhabitants of the town, who may, in their fright, flee far enough to leave the estate altogether—and what would I then do for servants? And if the people leave—if they do not come with the estate to the new site—, how shall I be able to cultivate the land, harvest the crops, or get any good out of it? Everything must harmonize—land, and people to work it."

"Get any good out of it? He, he, he," snickered 'Old Scratch', "you have much to learn yet. We look at these matters from a different viewpoint. If anything good were to come of it, I would be working against my own nature and inclination.

"Don't you see, my dear Guaracha, working the greatest havoc and confusion possible, puts me in high feather—then I am in my element. Harmony—I never could make anything out of it—I hate the very word. No, give me strife—pit one against the other—leave

everything at odds and in extremities; then we shall have results—for the sulphuric regions.

“Please do not misunderstand me, my dear Strumpa: do not think I would not love to take your servants and all the people on the estate, for there is nothing that would gladden my weazened old heart more.

“But there are certain laws that I cannot transgress. I cannot take these souls until they come to me, when their time is due.

“Your time is due. And your estate is yours, to do with what you please; you paid for it, in full—never mind how you obtained the money, the essential thing is that you had it. You did not pay for a mere life interest in it—it is yours forever and a day: so why should you not have it and enjoy it? I am merely accommodating you—doing a little favor, which I am always happy to render, whenever the results will be in conformity with the policy of my kingdom.”

In despair old Strumpa wandered through the palace calling to his servants, alternately imploring and cursing them. No one answered—the place seemed like a tomb. Out into the town he went, running like one demented; not a human being could be seen—the inhabitants had deserted, abandoning everything. Back into the palace he ran, muttering curses and imprecations. Soon, he thought, he detected a strange odor, somewhat similar to the odor he had noticed when the “Scratchlings” were assembled, only stronger,

but not seeing any of these about, the fear of fire began to oppress him.

Searching for the fire, he rambled from room to room, coughing, wheezing and almost suffocating from the stifling fumes which with each passing minute grew stronger and more penetrating.

Finally, unable to breathe, he fell gasping to the floor and, while frenziedly mumbling the most loathsome curses, gradually sank into insensibility.

* * * *

Almost a hundred years later, old Mr. Strumpa, now thoroughly acclimated in the "fummy regions," experienced a change of heart.

He had seen one parcel of land after another brought down and added on to the ever growing stretch of new country, completely surrounded by an endless bog. Most of these tracts of land held a beautifully appointed residence, and some had a large number of houses in addition, but never more than one occupant.

One night Mr. Strumpa, in traveling about the country—for he had acquired the native "Scratchling's" ability to transport himself from one section to another with the greatest rapidity—came to the residence of a recent arrival.

Curious to learn of the present conditions in Atlantis, he entered the residence.

The gentleman had brought several parcels of land; one, containing the beautiful residence; another, occu-

pied by a large manufacturing plant; and a few more, smaller plots, with tenements and apartment houses.

Mr. Strumpa found the manufacturer sitting in his library, gazing stolidly, through the window, at the distant factory.

Recognizing him as an old acquaintance, he greeted him, saying: "Hello, Mr. Pantuflo! How are you? Just arrived, hey? Well, I am glad to see you down here among us. Feeling a little down in the mouth, eh? Oh, that's natural! But you will soon accustom yourself to the climate and conditions down here. It gets rather monotonous, I will admit, but we have our diversions, occasionally. Next week we are going to have an initiation of a large number of hypocrites—you know, those who were not honest in their wickedness, but used the mantle of goodness as a cloak for their evil, or wrong, doings.

"But why are you staring so hard at your old, empty factory? By the 'Scratch', what was the idea of bringing that down here?

"You know it is useless—as is all the property we have here—; and you had a family—a nice family, too."

"Damn the family!" returned Mr. Pantuflo. "We were all at loggerheads—fighting like cats and dogs—and when 'Old Scratch' came along and showed me how I could take the property with me I jumped at the chance.

"It is of no value down here, but at least the old wife is not going to have it, nor those lazy, sponging

kids of mine. Let them get out and rustle for a living—then, perhaps, they will wish that they had treated me with greater appreciation.”

“But wasn’t it community property?” asked Mr. Strumpa.

“Well,” said Mr. Pantuflo, “some of it was mine before marriage, and some was acquired after; but in any case, it stood in my name—and possession is nine points in law—, and so, with the able assistance of ‘Old Scratch’, I took it.

“Now let them whistle for it, ha, ha, ha,” laughed Mr. Pantuflo, cheering up, of a sudden, and rubbing his hands in pure “Scratchanic” satisfaction.

“But, my dear Pantuflo, isn’t it rather difficult to make a living, these days, in Atlantis?”

“I should imagine the land and resources are beginning to be very limited, to judge from the size of our, ever growing, colony.”

“Yes indeed!” chirped Mr. Pantuflo, “That’s true; and life was beginning to be very interesting up there—in fact, I hated to leave.

“People came to me—young men and women—begging for the chance to make any kind of a living, so they could get something to eat; and they will yet be eating one another.

“Oh! I tell you, some of those young ‘chickens’ will be good picking, ha, ha, ha.

“The continent is growing smaller, year by year; but what is left is all the more valuable; and the rabble,

while sometimes violent, are not near as overbearing as formerly. They do not prate so much about their pretended rights, but approach you in a supplicating manner which is more in conformity with the eternal fitness of things. When violence breaks out they can always control it, by hiring and equipping the docile group to force the rebels into submission."

"But," questioned Mr. Strumpa, "isn't this all wrong?"

"The property is of no use to us, down here; in fact, I believe, we would be more carefree and happier by not having it here as a perpetual reminder of our former existence in Atlantis.

"And really," he went on, soliloquizing, "I think 'Old Scratch' is pursuing a very shortsighted policy—he is overreaching himself. For, with the land gone, the people will also be exterminated. And where is he then going to get his harvest of souls?"

"There should be 'live and let live,' even from a 'scratchical' point of view.

"Of course, he is reaping heavy crops these years; but even he will pay for it in the end. For the day is surely coming when the ocean will have free play over the place where the continent of Atlantis once supported millions of people.

"I am sorry that I started this game—that I put the notion into his horny head.

"But I was always doing something rotten. I started rotten and I continued rotten—so, naturally, the results are rotten.

"I took the property with me because I had no heirs; but why didn't I leave it to the people—divide it up, among them?

"Why? Oh! it was the very fear of that which led 'Old Scratch' to offer to take it along; and, in my greed and blind ignorance, I fell into his trap—just as all these 'boobs' are doing.

"I wish I could return to Atlantis and warn the people—make them see the danger they are running, headlong, into.

"I am going to see 'Old Scratch,' and get his permission to return."

And off he went, in search of "Old Scratch."

He found him, very busy, sticking sulphur coated pins into a fat bishop.

As he approached, "Old Scratch," observing him, out of the tail of his eye, greeted him: "Hello, Guaracha, old stiff! How is the 'Scratchy kingdom' treating you? Are you getting any misery out of it?

"I am so busy—it is very regrettable I can spare no time for your edification—it is all I can do to take these newcomers in hand. But with some, as, for instance, our friend here, the need is so crying that I have to attend to them personally.

"It's a long time since I saw you; but you seem to be taking on the right tint.

"Have you ever noticed any sparks in your nostrils?

"Come here, let me feel of your forehead.

"Aha! There are little buttons appearing—they are beginning to sprout. You should stick around headquarters a little more.

"What can I do you for?"

"Most powerful 'Old Scratch,' said Mr. Strumpa, "I have been feeling quite homesick, lately. Old memories of my former life have been tantalizing me; and I would so love to visit my old haunts in Atlantis."

"Oh, slush!" vociferated "Old Scratch," as he jabbed a pin of extra generous dimensions into the fat bishop, which made that worthy howl with delight; "for a prospective 'Subscratch,' you are, certainly, very diplomatic.

"Come, you know I love the truth—pass the counterfeit on the outside, but at headquarters, please remember, nothing can pass but the genuine article.

"Your main trouble is that your damp piece of ground has given you 'cold feet.' Long years ago, I advised you to stick around headquarters—this is where the horns grow. At the rate yours are growing, it will be at least three hundred years before you will be able to assist at the initiations.

"Now, let us have the real facts."

"Well," began Mr. Strumpa, realizing the futility of trying to evade the issue, "I have been thinking, most gracious 'Scratch,' that it is not fair, or just, to transplant the land and property from Atlantis, where they really, sadly, need it, and place it down here, where

we have no infernal use for it. And feeling, in a measure, guilty for initiating the movement, my conscience has been torturing me, lately, urging me to make an attempt, with your kind permission, to induce those people to see things in the true light."

"Ha, ha, ha, what a brilliant idea," sneered "Old Scratch", "just what I thought I read in your eyes the moment I saw you.

"You want to go back and preach against your adopted country, you old traitor?

"Well, you have my blessings—'go, right, to it.' Take the ferry tonight—I will give you a pass.

"You will make a fine missionary, with your experience—and I am a good sport, to let you go—but I 'bank' on human nature."

At midnight old Strumpa appeared in Sirnolkroy; wandering through the joyshops and meeting some of his old cronies—old men now, who, when he last saw them, were only middle aged. Upon greeting these, and being introduced to others, they all made wry faces at the peculiar atmosphere that surrounded him.

"And how is Big Stiefel," he asked, "I haven't seen him—isn't he here any more?"

"Old Stiefel is dying," he was told, "and is considering taking all his property with him.

"You know, he owns a lot of real estate, some of it right here, in the center of the city.

"This country is 'on its last leg'; but what can we do? A man has the right to his own property. He in-

herited most of it, but acquired several pieces himself; and, of course, there can be no disputing his right to dispose of it in any manner he likes.

"One of my neighbors left his estate to a pet snake. I don't think the Snake family will ever die out; but it is better than removing the property to the 'nether regions'—at least, it maintains a staff of attendants, administering to the snakes.

"Go up and have a talk with him, Strumpa, perhaps you can persuade him to leave it, for the good of the community."

When Mr. Strumpa walked into the sick chamber, the dying man held up his hand and, in a quivering voice, began to entreat: "No, no, not yet—give me a little more time, I am still weighing your suggestion."

Then, recovering himself, and recognizing his visitor, he shamefacedly said: "'Old Scratch' was here, less than an hour ago, and was very angry because I have donated part of my estate for the erection and maintenance of a library. And, at the first glance I had of you, I thought he had returned to claim me—really, the deception entered through my nostrils, even before I looked at you."

"And why, if I may ask," began Mr. Strumpa, "do you wish to take any of the property with you?"

"It will do you no good down there; and here they certainly need it."

"And why," retorted Mr. Stiefel, "should I not take it? Nearly everyone does, nowadays; and no one has

any better right to it than I—besides, I think, I have been very liberal in donating one quarter of my fortune for a benevolent purpose.”

“But,” insisted Mr. Strumpa, “I have spent nearly a hundred years in the ‘fummy regions,’ and I know that the property, once removed to that place, will remain there idle and of no infernal use either to yourself, your fellow souls, or even to the ‘Scratchlings’.”

“Well,” commented Mr. Stiefel, “that does not make a particle of difference.

“Some of my property has been vacant and idle here, and, for years, I have been paying the taxes, while getting no earthly use, or good, out of it.

“But do you think that would have justified me in handing it over to someone else—giving it away, for nothing?

“Why! I would have been an unearthly fool.

“Down there, I shall not have to pay taxes; and, who knows, the time may come when it will be valuable—besides, I shall always have the pleasure of possession.

“The trustees for the library have, also, been urging me to leave the whole fortune, subject to their control.

“Greediness, I call it—I have a good notion to take it all, and not leave them anything.”

Mr. Strumpa attempted to convince a number of people of the futility of removing their properties from Atlantis, but invariably with the self-same result—

human greed and covetousness overcoming all other considerations. Some would leave part of the estate to their children, but always reserving a portion for themselves; just as some of our savage tribes have the custom of having their favorite weapons and choicest utensils buried with the possessor upon his decease.

Finally, Mr. Strumpa decided to brrr-rrr-r- brr-r-

DEMOCRACY COME TRUE

THE VOICE OF A DREAMER.

Excuse me for appearing a little previous. But this is the year of our Lord 2000 A. D.

It is Friday, shortly after the noon hour; and I have just alighted from the monorail-car, coming from my work.

The week's work is ended, and I have my paycheck, my week's earnings, in my pocket.

I live, just two blocks, down this shady avenue, on the "Northside", in Chicago; where, they tell me, a hundred years ago humanity sweltered in congested, pigeon-holed, box-like buildings.

My name is Frank Lucero. I am twenty-three years old, machinist by occupation, and am seriously considering matrimony; but "that is another story", as an English writer, in the gold-age, expressed it.

Perhaps I shall tell you of it later. I do not know, for I treasure this "pearl" of mine above all, and do not like to discuss her even with my nearest.

As we stroll along, I wish to call your attention to the entire absence of anything in the nature of fences or hedges. The blocks are quite large; each block being one continuous lawn with flowers, shade trees, an occasional fruit tree, and fringed with a double

row of well spaced cottages—every alternate cottage set well back to form the second row.

Four blocks form a community center, for co-operative service. Here, where the corners of the four blocks converge, we find the community service-station—the co-operative laundry, bakery, barber-shop, etc; the natatorium and gymnasium; social center for dancing and wholesome recreation. Here, too, are the headquarters of the caretaker of the grounds, with his motor-driven lawn mower.

And this explains why we no longer have any public parks—because the whole city is one vast park where the children may romp and play, and yet always with their elders close at hand.

But, here we are! This is my home—not very pretentious, nor so very humble. Come right in, as many of you as can find room—it is not every day I have the honor of entertaining my dead ancestors.

This is our living room. You will observe it has windows on three sides and covers the whole ground-plan of the building, with the exception of a tiny kitchen and the dining room. The upper story contains the bedrooms, sleeping porches, bathroom and wardrobes.

Please notice the cases of books—the pick of the English literature and some French and German authors.

Do you know that the three languages are gradually merging into one, with a liberal sprinkling of

Spanish and Italian? Father says that in another hundred years we shall have a new universal language, developed through a natural process of elimination and selection. Already, we have progressed so far that any one of the three nationals can understand the other's speech, without having previously studied one another's language. And many English words that a hundred years ago were common currency are rapidly becoming obsolete.

Step into our dining room—let me open the wide sliding doors for the occasion.

Aha! Here we have the whole family, assembled for the noon-day repast. This is my mother, still a young lady, only forty-five; my father, fifty years of age and good for at least fifty more—notice the boyish look in his eyes. He is foreman of a department in our immense shoe manufacturing plant.

This is my three years' younger sister, who aspires to become a full-fledged teacher within the year—but certain indications seem to foreshadow that she will never teach other people's children. (Please don't look at her in that "tone of voice", it starts a contest of sunshine and shadow on her face.)

This is the baby of the family—trying hard to be a man at seventeen—at present, a university student with the aim of entering the executive branch of the government and to become, ultimately, if his dreams come true, president of the United States.

Excuse me a moment while I run upstairs.

Brrr-rr-r-r-r (returning).

I am sorry that, for psychic reasons, conversation with the other members of the family is impossible, so I shall not absent myself any more than necessary.

You will observe, as we proceed, that the dominant factor in our present-day system is not profit, but service—the systematized subdivision of service and cooperation—the catering to our needs in abundance and, at the same time, the husbanding of our natural resources and the elimination of waste, in efforts as well as in materials.

Will you sit down and share our repast?

Oh, I beg your pardon! I forgot that for years you have not partaken of earthly food; but, nevertheless, be with us in spirit.

You may notice that, as yet, there is very little on the table. But just watch mother close; that electric scribe in her right hand is the magic wand that shall supply all our needs.

(Yes, mother, that will be just fine, and a small dish of ice cream for dessert.)

Now, as she speaks in the telephone, the phonoscope at each end registers a record of the spoken order; then she signs it with the electric scribe, which makes it an authenticated phonogram.

Now she has the order complete and is signing her name, and over in the big kitchen of the community service-station, a block away, they are reading the exact duplicate.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

Oh, yes! In our tiny little kitchen, mother, whenever the spirit moves her, tries to outdo our scientific chef. We have our own electric oven, ready for instant use; by turning a switch the house may be heated to any desired degree, at a small cost, and many little contrivances and conveniences that were in an embryo state a hundred years ago add to our comfort.

If you were not present and could judge for yourselves, you would not form a very high opinion of us when I tell you that we have no such implement as a broom in the house.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

No, the only kind I have seen are those they use in outbuildings; but grandfather often described old-time methods.

Here comes the luncheon!

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

Oh, no! Through the tube, of course.

Oh, I forgot to call your attention to it. This is what has helped to solve the servant problem, and taken the place of the old-fashioned delivery system—this is where we use some of the materials that you expended in killing one another.

Excuse me, I did not mean to be personal.

This tube—no, we discarded the pneumatic, this is electric—leads to the service-station; and every dwelling in the city is similarly connected with its respective service-station.

From the central tube-station, down in the service section, on the other side of the river, larger tubes radiate to every service-station in the city. There, close at hand, and similarly connected with the central tube-station, are the mammoth depots, or magazines, for milk, groceries, dry-goods, etc. The distribution of the mail is effected through this same system.

Of course, furniture and other bulky goods are delivered by rail and truck.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

No, people are not carried in the large tubes—no, not even operators—the conveyances are dispatched from the end of the tube and shot through to their destination, at a terrific speed. And although the tubes are close to the surface, in order to be readily accessible, the majority of people prefer to stay above ground so long as possible. We hurry goods, but not people.

Grandpa, once, about two years before he died, told me of having seen, many times, rival milkmen delivering milk in the same street, and often to different families in the very same building. One man walking right behind the other—doing double service and, naturally, making the cost of delivery doubly expensive—as if one bottle of milk were not as good as another, if properly standardized and certified.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

“Semi-business street?”

Oh, you mean where there would be a small service establishment here and there, scattered about, competing independently one against the other.

No, we have nothing like that.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

Certainly, any one is at liberty to start an independent "business", should he feel so inclined; but he can do far better by co-operating in the existing system, either in production or distribution. In fact, he could not invest his time and earnings in such a venture and sell at the prevailing prices, without meeting certain loss.

One can buy a great many things at these service-stations; or one may do his shopping in the big magazines down town, carry away his purchase, or have it delivered by tube. There is only a slight difference between the down town price and the local, and the prices at the various service-stations are alike.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

Oh, no! None of the big magazines belong to any "merchant prince", they are all co-operative concerns. Each one handles only a certain line of goods and there is but one of its kind to serve each city, and they are capitalized according to the number of inhabitants in the city they serve.

Father owns stock in several of the magazines. When he dies, the shares automatically revert back to Uncle Sam, and are immediately sold to the highest bidder.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

"Does not anyone attempt to gain control of the stock in order to manipulate it?"

It is hardly possible.

There is a federal department for each branch of industry which exercises supervision, and all the departments are controlled by The Supreme Economic Council. The agricultural, mercantile, industrial and railway stocks pay about the same rate of interest; and the shares in local concerns are held, as a rule, by local people and are very much scattered.

Death, moreover, is continually tending to disseminate the stock into new hands.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

You mean, make a fraudulent transfer of the stock to his children.

Well, no man knows just when he is going to die—even when seriously ill, he may recover and live for years—and the natural tendency is to cling to what we have and enjoy it so long as possible, especially when the children are well able to take care of themselves. Should they be under age, there would be no need to resort to fraud in order to provide for them; for in that case a sufficient allowance for their maintenance will be paid quarterly out of the proceeds of the sale of the estate.

Furthermore, the stock is registered in his name, and his only chance would be to sell it for cash and hand them the money.

This would be a rather shady appearing transaction. Because he would be selling dividend-paying shares, while it is common knowledge that only a very low rate of interest is obtainable in the bank. Besides, the sale would be subject to a heavy stamp-tax, which, if he wished to use the money for the purchase of other shares, or a house, or to build one, could be reduced to a mere nominal one, by leaving the money subject to his order upon the completion of the transaction.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

Oh, yes! I heard of a man once who hoarded his money—they say, he would take it out of its hidden place, count and recount it, stack it up and gloat over it. But when it came his time to die, he waited too long to confide in his children, that, when he realized all hopes were vain, he was unable to tell them.

And so they searched everywhere for the hidden money they knew he had accumulated, but did not find it until the following year, and then, of course, it was worthless.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

Why, certainly! How could it possibly be otherwise, since the money was of the previous year's series?

Oh, I beg your pardon! Our friend, over there, shaking his skull, drew my attention to the fact that you all lived in the gold-age.

No, we use gold only as a commodity, not as a medium of exchange. That we regard as a very barbaric method, susceptible of many abuses.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

Oh, yes! There are still large spots in Asia where they swing the gold-club against one another. And in our trade with those countries—since they crave some of our commodities so fervently—we often, when not needing any more of their goods, accept gold and silver to cover the balance.

But the very fact that there is such a balance to be squared with what you called the “precious metals” is *prima facie* evidence that there was no legitimate need for the trade on our part, although there may have been urgent necessity on their part.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

Oh, we use it for shaving-mugs, door-knobs, chess-pieces, etc.

Our medium of exchange is a paper currency, a new series—of distinct color and bearing the numerals of the year—being issued annually.

The new series for 2001 will be available in a few weeks, or, to be precise, after the first of October, at all the banks in the country.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

No, we have no privately owned banks. We have only one bank for each city or district, and they are all links in the chain of the federal banking system.

If I should tube my week's pay, which I have in the form of a check, to the service-station and request cash, they would immediately transmit this year's currency. Should I, on the other hand, tube it to the

down town bank to be deposited to my credit and then, after the first of October, draw against my account, either direct or through the service-station, I would receive next year's currency.

With the entrée of the new year, the last year's medium of exchange is void.

With the absolute security of the banks and our modern facilities for depositing and withdrawing, the bulk of the medium of exchange is always in circulation and always available for service.

There is no private hoarding of money; the whole system tends to discourage such a procedure. For, with the exception of necessary pocket money, nothing could possibly be gained by withdrawing the money from the bank until actually needed, and then payments are made, as a rule, by check.

And even if a person hid away his money, he could not keep it secret, for it would be necessary to bring it forth once every year in order to exchange it for bills of the new issue.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

Oh, it is based upon, and redeemable in, the wealth of the nation; and it is receivable for the discharge of all debts and the payment of all dues and fees, whether private or public, until the end of the year for which it has been issued.

The volume is calculated according to the population of the country—so much per capita. (You know, we have a very accurate census method—every man,

woman and child is registered at these service-stations, and births, deaths and transfers are recorded.)

Of course, there is always some currency that remains unredeemed at the end of the year, and represents a net gain to society by being issued through the expenditures of the government.

I read an old book last week, written more than a hundred years ago, when the people seemed to be greatly agitated about silver coinage, at the rate of sixteen to one, paper currency, and kindred subjects.

The writer, to illustrate the unsuitability of paper currency as a medium of exchange—because its value would depend upon the stability of the government that issued it—quoted as an example, that if a person should find a chest filled with Roman paper currency and bearing the signature of Julius Cæsar, the find would be worthless, except for its numismatic value.

On the other hand, should the chest contain Roman gold-coins, they would have the same value that they had when Julius Cæsar marched at the head of his legions.

It seems so strange how, in the gold-age, people permitted the glamour of gold to obscure their vision and bias their reasoning. For, truly, at the time, neither had any value as a medium of exchange.

The gold had value as commodity—no more, no less.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

"Was the finder of the gold-coins ethically entitled to keep and profit by his find?"

As a commodity, he did service by discovering and rendering it, again, available for society's use.

As a medium of exchange—if he could have it re-coined—it would be a positive detriment to society, because he would be taking someone's bread, someone's labor, without returning service in kind.

Therefore, the possession of money—medium of exchange—which does not represent service in kind, or represents service rendered to dead and gone generations, compels someone else to do double service.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

What's that? You mean to say, "a large volume of money is a blessing and spells prosperity".

You may as well say that a large size belt on a steam-engine is beneficial and develops power.

It seems to me that the belt should be properly proportioned to transmit what energy the engine has developed into transmissible power—no more, no less—and should be maintained in that correct proportion.

Let us suppose, for example, that, during the gold-age, one of your farmer-friends had found that his fields of ripe wheat had turned, over night, into gold; not figuratively, but literally and truly—the golden grains of wheat being now solid grains of pure gold.

Think of it—what good luck! How he would make haste to garner the golden crop, ship it to the mint and have it coined. How the neighbors would envy him

his splendid, good fortune. But when they discover that their wheat, too, has been transmuted into gold, they all rejoice together.

Shortly after comes the news that all the wheat in the country has solidified into gold, ready to be coined.

What a fortunate nation!

What a lucky people!

They can buy the earth—the balance of the world is at their mercy. (Were they sane—and the rest of the world not equally imbued with the gold-bug fever—they would know that they are, on the contrary, at the mercy of the other nations.)

See how values go up, wages climb overnight—one must be a fool indeed not to recognize prosperity. Property that formerly sold for one thousand “bones” now commands a price of ten thousand and above—all net gain.

Prosperity! Money!

Every one has it in plenty and to spare.

And, whereas the crop of wheat would have been consumed in the course of a year, the harvest of gold remains with them—leaving them permanently upon this splendid, higher level—hurrah! hurrah!

Well, why don't you join in?

Oh, I am always forgetting that you have lost your organs of speech—but you might at least rattle your bones.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-r-?

Yes, I understand you.

You wish to instance countries that were rich in natural resources, while the people remained poverty-stricken—living miserable lives—for the lack of capital to develop the potential wealth.

But those people, hampered by old customs and traditions, were not alive to the problem, nor advanced sufficiently to be able to cope with the situation intelligently, either in regard to the formulation of a serviceable medium of exchange or in modern practice of the mechanical arts, independently and without foreign guidance.

Brrr-rr-rr-r-r?

Yes, we still work mines for gold and silver, but strictly for the commodity value of the metals. And there are places where we are able to work the deposits very cheaply and, by means of the electro-chemical process, extract the mineral *in situ*.

Many prospectors make independent searches for new deposits of mineral and either sell their finds or organize stock corporations, under the immediate supervision of the Department of Mines, to develop them.

Sometimes the government co-operates in the development of promising deposits of coal, oil and minerals; and it is especially willing and ready to assist in the boring of long and deep tunnels, for the more economical working and draining of partly developed groups of mines.

But there is no feverish haste to extract the minerals in order to obtain profit, and when the country's needs are filled, try to force yet more on it or go in search of foreign markets, as was formerly done for the sake of gain.

Grandfather often described his father's lumbering operations in the Pacific Northwest.

He owned big tracts of the finest Douglas fir, cedar, hemlock and spruce, but he seems to have been consumed with an unholy desire to cut it down.

Grandpa said, when the domestic market was glutted, they would search the world for opportunities to dispose of it in foreign lands; and the keen competition was such as to render only the very best part of the lumber marketable, leaving one-half of the product on the ground to rot.

And even when times were dull (I did not quite understand what he meant, but he explained to me that times were dull when all the markets, foreign and domestic, were well provided with material and no one cared to purchase any more) operations were continued, although at reduced wages and with smaller crews, with a view to hold the markets and sometimes, in order to meet financial obligations, even at a loss in values and materials.

Then all would suffer and bemoan their cruel fate—owners and workmen alike—and hearken back to the time when there was a great scarcity, and, consequently, demand for labor and material.

But should the news arrive of some great holocaust, some large city devastated, the prospect would immediately assume a more promising outlook.

All this seemed so paradoxical, and my childish mind could not grasp how abundance and plenty could possibly bring hard times, want and misery.

Nor could I understand how a disaster in one section of the country could possibly create prosperity in another. For I had often heard father say that if some extreme misfortune, such as a large conflagration, should befall us in any part of the country, society as a whole would be the loser. The financial loss would be so abnormal that there would be danger of depleting the nation's insurance fund to such an extent as to necessitate assistance from the Treasury Department, or a special tax levy upon the people. Beyond this, there would be a heavy temporary drain upon our surplus of commodities and materials, which would have a tendency to disarrange our economic adjustment so that, if such disasters occurred frequently, the Supreme Economic Council might feel obliged to lengthen the standard workday.

Knowing this—since it had all been explained to me so often that I knew it by heart—I could not fathom the complex mystery of the gold-age service method. And so, I asked grandpa if there was anything the matter with great-grand-daddy, and whether the big trees affected him like the windmills did Don Quixote.

Then he laughed at my childish ignorance, and assured me that his father had been a very clever business man and knew perfectly well what he was about.

And he explained how great-grand-daddy had invested many, many gold-coins in the purchase of timber land (he did not tell me how he had obtained the gold-coins, but I thought to myself, "great-grand-daddy must have rendered a lot of service to his fellow men to get so much of the medium of exchange"), and what concerned him above all was to get his money out of it. The quicker he could cut down and market the timber, or the best part of it, the quicker would he get back, not only the gold-coins invested, but many more besides.

Then I clapped my little hands and felt a great deal of pride that my great-grandfather had been such a genius. But suddenly a new idea entered my head, and I asked grandpa what great-grand-daddy did with his piles of gold when all the timber was gone.

"Oh," said grandpa, "as the timber dwindled, he invested it in real estate and office buildings in Seattle; that, he reasoned, would give him a nice monthly rent-roll."

"But, the people," questioned I, "what were they going to do when all the timber was cut? And where were they going to get their lumber? Could they live by collecting one another's rent?"

"Oh," he said, "the people had nothing to do with the matter—they were not considered—it was none of

their affairs. Father had a habit of saying, 'the people be damned', and kept right on sawing wood."

Brrr-rr-rr-r-r?

Yes, I understand what you wish to express.

You are trying to ask: "What do we do when overproduction and lack of markets bring hard times, want and suffering? Don't we, also, when the domestic market fails to absorb any more goods, send out people to open up and develop new markets in foreign countries, in order to dispose of the excess of foodstuffs and commodities, so that our producers may be able to hold their employment and live?"

If you had asked me those questions a few years ago, I would not have understood what you meant; but I have since read some of the old-time literature, and, so, I appreciate your point of view.

And shame as it is to confess the shortcoming, we have no markets, as you understood that word. We simply co-operate to produce and exchange (not in a primitive way by barter, but through our national currency, as a properly adjusted medium of exchange) sufficiently to fill our needs—no more, no less.

Yes, I can tell by the way your jawbones sagged that you consider it a very dull, profitless business, unworthy the mettle of a Christian gentleman. And still you wonder how we adjust matters and guard against overproduction.

So far back as Adam, discerning people have noticed that the longer a person labors, other things be-

ing equal, the more he produces. Or, in other words, the greater the exertion, under any given condition, the greater the results.

This mysterious, hidden law has been recognized upon numerous occasions in by-gone ages, and during the gold-age it was interpreted in various ways.

Under our present systematized arrangement of society, whose every member must, of necessity, engage in some useful occupation, we have found that normal conditions can be maintained by working four hours per day, five days in the week, throughout the year. This applies to all adults alike, irrespective of occupation, and means that one thousand and forty hours per year is the maximum that anyone is permitted to labor—unless substituting for someone else who happens to be temporarily incapacitated and who is, by granting the permit of substitution, reduced a corresponding number of hours from his allotted one thousand and forty.

However, it is optional with a person if he wishes to work less, or, having sufficient income, not at all; or work long hours during certain seasons, as do the farmers. The mammoth agricultural tractor plant, where I am employed, operates six hours per day during certain seasons of the year, in order to permit the operatives to get their time in quicker and then take their vacation. And many mills and industrial establishments, where the work is suitable for such arrangement, run eight hours per day with two crews, each crew working four hours.

No vacation with pay is given anyone, as was done in the gold-age—every one must arrange, and pay, for his own comfort and pleasure.

We have discarded everything that savors of being gratuitous—everything must be earned.

The hours of labor cannot be adjusted and regulated by and for the advantage of any certain branch of labor, nor is such regulation subject to the caprice of any state legislature.

Father says that if people continue to demand luxuries and more conveniences in an increasingly greater ratio, we shall soon have to lengthen the workday. But I do not think it will be necessary, for I believe people are gradually adopting and learning to recognize the advantages of a saner mode of living.

In any case, the volume of production and the time required to produce it are interdependent, and one must be adjusted by the other.

There is also a distinct relation between the amount of luxury demanded and the leisure to enjoy such luxuries, on the one hand, and the time and labor required to pay for them, on the other—one acting as a check upon the other.

Of course, there is always a surplus from one season to another, over and above what is requisite for the strictly legitimate foreign trade, and which is to a great extent exchanged for foreign, really superfluous, luxuries. But so long as there is not a great continuous general excess in the major branches of produc-

tion, season after season, there is no need for any further adjustment.

Therefore, over-production cannot create hard times. On the contrary, it would mean that the economic conditions dictate we should exert ourselves less to obtain the same results: i. e., the hours of labor allotted to each adult must be reduced by the Supreme Economic Council—or, to be precise, it would be the duty of the Supreme Economic Council to recommend to Congress such a reduction.

Reversely, should the domestic demand (which includes our exchange for necessary foreign products) exceed the supply in the majority of lines of production—should there be an augmenting lessening of the surplus, season after season—the remedy would be an increase in the number of work-hours allotted.

There is a self-regulating, natural adjustment going on continuously between the different branches of labor which no one—not even the Supreme Economic Council—has any right to interfere with.

If too many individuals enter any given branch of labor, there will, naturally, be an over-production in the output of that branch. For the same reason, there will be a smaller number of persons to enter some other branch, or branches, with a consequent reduction in the materials produced.

The results will, obviously, be a tendency to lower prices for the commodities produced by the first branch; and, because of the comparative scarcity, bet-

ter prices obtainable for the commodities produced by the second branch. And, observing this, intelligent labor adjusts the balance.

Of course, in this illustration, no allowance has been made for the modifying influences of the elements or other causes over which man has no control. But beyond these, labor and industry are left unhampered by any restriction, free to seek their natural level within such safeguards and regulations as apply uniformly throughout the nation.

And so, we have no labor organizations, no trade unions, no strikes, no lockouts, no wild speculation, no trusts or combinations to maintain prices. (You see, I have read ancient literature, so I am familiar with the nomenclature.) We are just one gigantic combination, each one realizing that we must all co-operate and work together for the common good.

Your slogan seems to have been: "Every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost." Ours is: "All together—co-operating."

Brrr-rr-rr-r-r?

Yes, indeed! Your observation is correct—so we could.

(I notice your eagerness—"what a chance for making profits!")

With this gigantic co-operating organization—where everyone does something useful—eliminating all waste in the handling of materials, we produce the finished article much cheaper, considering the amount

of energy expended, than has ever been done before in the world's history. And being in the lead of other nations—since we took the initiative in introducing this system—we can undersell them all.

Now, you suggest to double the length of the work-day, making it eight hours. And, by so doing, double the extraction of minerals from the mines, cut twice the present number of feet of lumber, produce more foodstuff. Then, after turning the raw materials into their respective finished products—since we ourselves could not consume any more than at present—send representatives into foreign markets to establish business houses.

We could easily undersell and kill the competition of other nations that are not quite so well organized, or lack the rich abundance of resources which are at present accessible to us.

Of course, the various nations would pass laws, rules and regulations, each one seeking to favor the disposal of its own products in the different markets of the world.

This would lead to endless international adjustments and readjustments, provide a large field for the exercise of clever diplomacy, and by the middle of next summer we might be engaged in a glorious war.

What a splendid improvement that would be upon our present arrangement.

Obviously, we could not take in exchange any more of their commercial products, since we already ex-

change with them sufficiently to fill our requirements. But we could take other valuables, such as works of art, antique articles, stones (precious), gold and silver. Especially of the last two we could drain the world and accumulate a large surplus.

But we already have sufficient for all the door-knobs we need; we do not require any more shaving-mugs, thank you, and to make them more massive would only call for more strength to hold them (really, that is a trifling matter, not worth grumbling about, I suppose it could be borne with the rest of it); of chess-pieces, the present supply would be more than abundant, since, because of the longer work-day, our leisure hours would be sharply curtailed.

Truly, I do not know what we would do with a larger supply of what you termed "the precious metals", unless we turned it into baby-rattles and toys for the children—but I have not noticed that the children are languishing for the lack of it.

And the time may come when it would be necessary to melt it (the supply of "precious metals") down again and return it in exchange for more indispensable minerals and materials that we had recklessly extracted and lavishly squandered.

My only fear is that they (the foreign nations) may prove more intelligent than we had been and not be content with the baubles, but demand what must always pay in the end—human labor. They may say: "If you want these materials, so necessary for your

sustenance, lend me in return your labor to extract them and you shall have a portion." Or, in other words, "make your own resources subservient to ours—we can produce everything that you do—you cannot produce what only nature endows, and which you have, by your extravagance, largely depleted."

For there are some resources that can never be increased, only husbanded; and what we squander to exchange for gewgaws, future generations will rue.

(For along these lines, eventually, the battle must be fought. And the only ultimate solution will be the practical recognition of the Universal Brotherhood of Man and the utilization of all the natural resources of the earth along lines, not based upon racial or political divisions, but upon a basic community of interest between all the children of men—permitting them to transplant themselves freely, at will, and with only the formality of registration (for while enjoying freedom, we must have order and system so that we may continue to enjoy it), from one part of the globe to another, where the fundamental division of labor is identical.)

Brrr-rr-rr-r-r?

Eh! "Building a Chinese wall around ourselves!" (I see you shaking your skulls.) You think ours a very selfish policy and that we consider only our own welfare, and not the advancement of other parts of the world along competitive lines.

But the other nations have the same recourse—we can put our own house in order, they must look to their houses.

Nevertheless, should dire need assail them, should failure of crop and famine be their lot, we would be the first to go to their assistance; we would go on half ration to alleviate the suffering, asking nothing in return—although hoping that they bear us in mind, should a similar occasion arise here.

Moreover, we exchange gladly and freely for everything we require—no more, no less. We do not look to the requirements of other nations—that is their affair. Nor do we permit exportation for individual gain.

Our foreign trade, export and import, is for the benefit of the population as a whole—all export being made through the Department of Foreign Trade, which adjusts matters so that the exporter receives no more than if he had sold in the domestic market. The difference goes to the public treasury.

Articles and commodities that we cannot produce are imported duty free. Those imported because of their superiority, either in material or workmanship, pay a tax proportioned so that the native product may not be forced out of the market.

In a magazine article, written in the fore part of the century, during the great war in Europe, the writer remarks: "The present prosperity of the country presages a fierce trade war when armed hostilities are

over. To this competition from abroad is added the internal pressure of a nation *no longer large enough* to provide a market for its own products."

It set me to search history and cyclopedia, but I failed to discover that the nation had at any time been retrogressive. On the contrary, if the books "speak" truly, we have, since our inception as a nation, continuously grown. And then it dawned upon me that the writer had "put the cart before the horse" in his reasoning as to cause and effect.

For we have at present a population in excess of two hundred million souls; and still we are large enough, or small enough, whichever you like, to provide all the market we need for what we produce, by not producing any more than we need.

If the writer had followed out his own line of reasoning, he would finally have arrived at a point where all the nations were "no longer large enough to provide markets for their own products". And I suppose he would have advised exporting to the moon, just for the benevolent purpose of keeping the poor in employment.

During the same period, in commenting upon the revolution in Russia, the American newspapers gloated over the opportunities for trade in that country, which might "now" be taken from Germany and exploited for the benefit of capital and industry in this country.

As if all what labor desired was a chance to labor—and no more. As if the highest aim and function

of capital—or the medium of exchange—was to enable those who had possession of it to exploit labor and the natural resources of one country as against another, for individual profit. As if this country needed the interest-bearing bonds which the Russian peasants would have to pay in labor, or as if Russia did not possess all the necessary resources in far greater abundance and which the native population were perfectly able to develop and utilize if given an equal chance.

But the great world war in Europe was the best thing that could have happened to humanity at that period. It was a blessing in disguise and came like a mighty storm after a season of unsettled weather, clearing the atmosphere and marking the end of warfare, let us hope, for all time.

It virtually terminated the king, czar and kaiser business, and the awful conflict brought home to the people a full realization of where their profit-seeking economic system would lead them.

It started ostensibly as a dynastic war for the balance of power between the reigning groups of royal houses—where the ruler spoke of “my fleet, my army, my kingdom”—but it soon developed into a struggle for democracy, for the right of the common people to live and labor for their own welfare. And as the battle for mastery raged, the people, in and out of the trenches, thought and recognized the fact that it was not enough to merely remove the group that had ruled by divine right and imposed political enslave-

ment for the advancement of their own selfish ends and greed for power, but to change the whole of the old system which permitted economic enslavement for the selfish end and greed for gold of a hereditary, favored class.

Then, after the war, little by little, went the privileged classes in this country, and adjustments were made gradually all along the line to conform to the altered conditions.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-r!

What's that? You thought "those who advocated the new system wanted the change made in one day".

No, that would have been too great a shock—that would have brought disorder and calamity. You probably got that impression by reading some of their literature before your death.

But the advocates of the new system evidently felt it was their place to urge it, even to extremes—that there would be plenty to preach moderation. And so it proved: for the new system was inaugurated with a straight inheritance tax of seventy-five per cent on that part of a fortune in excess of fifty thousand dollars.

Here it stuck for a time and there was grave danger of it remaining. But in the meantime, various adjustments, especially of the old tax system—many taxes being all but abolished—created an insistent demand for a further increase in the tax with a lower line of exemption.

Shortly after, a more orderly arrangement of the whole official system was introduced, greatly reducing the number of elective offices and systematizing the candidacy for office; forbidding public soliciting or campaigning for office and providing for automatic disfranchisement—making the office-holder truly a public servant.

Simultaneously, gold was demonetized and the new system of an annual issue of paper currency, to supersede the previous series, instituted.

This had a quickening influence—because the monetary medium of the old gold-base-system, cumbersome and superabundant, had greatly hampered matters by being readily hoarded and manipulated, facilitating the avoidance of payment of the tax—for people had long recognized the injustice of permitting anyone a handicap.

And then a great campaign cry arose: "Equal rights to all; special privileges to none—abolish 'dead men's shoes' *in toto*."

This swept away the last vestige of privilege, making the inheritance tax a straight one hundred per cent.

Of course, all this happened many years before I was born, and there is hardly a man living today possessing even the last remnant of a pair of "dead men's shoes".

Radical reconstructive changes have occurred all over the country, because of the altered economic con-

ditions, and it is small wonder that you do not recognize the land you once occupied.

Chicago is now next to the largest city in the country, and yet does not contain more than about five hundred thousand inhabitants.

Brrr-rr-rr-r-r-r-.

No, not so fast, we are not "speeding, to join you in the bone-yard".

Please remember—I have already told you—our total population is over two hundred millions. We are simply firm believers in the happy medium. We no longer build those excessively large cities, nor have we but very few really small towns or villages, with the exception of the agricultural hamlets, which I shall describe later.

New York is but slightly smaller than Chicago—and there are many cities that closely approach New York in size. New York lost its dense population because of the lack of the large foreign trade, gambling in stocks and securities, hoarding of the medium of exchange, and other similar luxuries that were indulged in during the gold-age.

We build our cities, of moderate size, at convenient points for manufacturing and distribution of the products; trying, so far as possible, to eliminate the long rail-haul of the raw materials.

Our main chain of manufacturing centers, or cities, are situated along the inland waterways, beginning at New Orleans and extending in ever-spreading branches

so far as a modern freight carrier can float in the waters between that city, New York, and the upper reaches of the Missouri.

Improvements have been made so that the rivers are under perfect control, and tribute is exacted in every way from the waters, not only of the main rivers but of every little tributary.

The power developed is utilized in the manufacturing centers and in the agricultural hamlets; and the streams, lakes and canals teem with a ceaseless floating procession of modern cargo carriers, transporting the raw and semi-finished materials from the various points of extraction to their respective destinations, for further manufacturing and distribution.

The inland waters are the veins of our main system of manufacturing plants—the rail-lines serve as capillaries, for feeding and distributing. The railways are not planned so as to feed towards any central point, as was formerly the method of centering the traffic upon the large cities, especially upon New York, for exportation, but to the nearest logical point on water. The object being to get the raw material to water, even if it be only the uppermost little tributary; then carry it through the streams, locks and canals to the logical point for conversion; then, again, transmit the semi-finished product further by water, or distribute the finished commodities by water and rail.

New Orleans is now our largest city and has a population of about six hundred thousand inhabitants.

This is the chief exporting center, and to which goods may be drawn in the most economical manner from practically the whole of the main producing area of the country. This, too, is the gateway for the interchange of bulky products and commodities between the inland basin and the Pacific Coast States.

Many large cargo boats wend their way from the Lakes or the upper branches of the rivers, down the waterways, through the locks and canals, out on the "briny", through the Panama Canal—serving the whole coast—up the Colorado, the Sacramento and the San Joaquin, the Columbia, Puget Sound and on to Alaska.

On the Pacific Coast great changes have also taken place.

The timber areas are being conserved by the proper provision for systematic cutting and replanting. The same is under way in Alaska, where large plantations of trees have been set out and are being cared for by the Forest Department.

The great interior valleys of California sustain a large population, and are in a high state of cultivation. The abundance of water has made these valleys a veritable Garden of Allah.

No water is permitted to escape to the sea without paying toll to man.

In the mountains, water is impounded at suitable sites and electricity generated, wherever it is possible to do so. When the water reaches the lower altitudes

and has yielded its energy, it is led through canals and cement aqueducts and distributed for irrigation. Drainage canals have been dug, in places in conjunction with large electrically-driven pumping plants, and the surplus water extracted and utilized over again.

The deserts are being developed and made fit for man to live in. Large areas, heavily impregnated with alkali, are being leached out and planted to alkali-resisting forage plants.

The Columbia River basin in Washington, Oregon and Idaho is highly developed and managed in like manner. As along the inland waterways, the raw materials are brought to water, where, at suitable points, are situated the well organized manufacturing centers.

Formerly, I have read, there was a great deal of jealousy engendered because some of the products of Eastern Washington were shipped the more natural down-grade haul to Portland, Oregon, instead of going out by way of Seattle, Washington.

But political divisions no longer govern in the slightest degree. No barriers of any kind, to favor one section as against another, are tolerated; the whole nation is one vast corporation, and everywhere the laws that regulate labor and industry are identical. And just as does the water, everywhere the trade flows along natural lines, the lines of least resistance, the most economical.

Up in the Cascade Range are a number of mammoth hydro-electric plants for extracting nitrogen from the air, and which is shipped to different parts of the country and used as a fertilizer.

Every stream throughout the mountains of the country is being made to pay tribute and furnishes the motive power for the railway system, and, so far as feasible, wherever motive power, artificial light and heat are required.

In every way the aim is to utilize the water power of the streams which nature has provided us, and husband our coal and oil, bearing in mind that our descendants in ages to come will require these limited deposits as well as we.

Most of the coal is consumed in water transportation, and the oil and its by-products in the arts and for self-propelling vehicles and aeronautic conveyances.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-rr!

What's that?

"Poor business!

"Interest on the capital invested!

"Improving the waterways and depreciating the value of the railways!

"Developing water power and wiping out the market for coal!

"Curtailing the field for the employment of labor!"

Yes, it is very sad that in a way your charges are well founded.

But, you see, we have no coal barons, whose interest must be conserved; nor have we any railway magnates, to oppose the development of the waterways and guard the welfare of the railways as paramount to the better improvement of the country.

In making these betterments, we do not consider the immediate profit or loss. The whole nation is doing team-work to permanently develop and improve the country for ourselves and our children. To conserve the natural resources we already have, and to develop and increase whatever source is responsive to that course of treatment.

We consider the best interests of society as outweighing, by far, the best interest of any single branch of industry. And your suggestion that to mine the coal would furnish more employment somehow does not appeal to us—I am afraid we are a hopelessly lazy crew, for our highest ambition seems to be to provide for our needs with as little exertion as possible.

If we were able, by means of some new invention or chemical process, or a combination of the two, to extract any mineral from its natural deposit with a greatly reduced expenditure of labor, no one would grieve because a large number of men would thereby be forced out of employment in that branch of industry. Quite the contrary, we would all rejoice that by virtue of the new discovery their labor would be available for other lines of activity, and that the Supreme Economic Council would take the situation in hand

and still further reduce the length of the necessary work-day.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-rr?

Yes, in other parts of the world, too, time has wrought great changes.

Europe, while still subdivided into many comparatively small states, is one vast democracy.

The best field for the new-born democracy proved to be Russia, which changed with great rapidity from the old autocratic, land-holding and exploiting régime to a well organized, co-operative commonwealth. Its immense wealth of resources, practically untouched, and its population unspoiled by commercialism, makes that country a strong unit in the Brotherhood of Man.

Western Europe is less fortunately situated.

The inhabitants of these countries were formerly sustained largely by exchanging the products of their skill for the foodstuffs and raw materials of other countries.

This is still being done, but along different lines.

The people of Europe are no longer being exploited by any captain of industry or by a hereditary, property-holding class, for all the nations have instituted the hundred per cent inheritance tax. And all production is carried on co-operatively, and the exchange of their manufactured articles for foodstuffs and foreign products is done co-ordinately for the benefit of all.

The old-time, blind, narrow patriotism that glorified fatherland just because one happened to be born there and looked with prejudice, suspicion and hatred upon people of other nationalities has entirely disappeared in all countries. And as a consequence, Europeans, in increasingly larger numbers, are settling in different parts of the world, and are welcomed there.

They no longer go to distant parts of the globe to open up and develop colonies for the benefit of, or to provide markets for, any certain country, to pay tribute to, directly or indirectly.

For the days of war are past, the days of petty national jealousy and strife are gone forever, never to return. And the men and women, of whatever nation, who settle and develop these new countries, do so understandingly, intermingling with men and women of other nationalities, to improve these waste places of the earth for themselves and their children as members of the common Brotherhood of Man.

Thus men and women of all the European nations are doing pioneer work in the tropics—in the West Indies, in Central and South America—and in Argentina another co-operative commonwealth is well under way.

The South Sea Islands, Australia and New Zealand are inviting millions to come, work and live in lands that flow with milk and honey.

In Africa, too—little clusters here and there—the white race is doing team-work to develop and make

that vast continent permanently inhabitable to civilized man.

And the only friction and touch of warfare that exists today is between the white and the colored races—where the advance guard of the white breed, doing pioneer work, comes in contact with savage or semi-barbaric people. These must adapt themselves to a new order of things, as laid down by the superior intelligence of the more advanced race; or accept the contest of the survival of the fittest.

In many of these localities, in different parts of the world, the economic and political governments are as yet too imperfectly organized to serve the best interests of society, but in the larger units of the white race the people have come into their own—although, in most, not so completely as in our own country. Nevertheless, there is a feeling of complete assurance that wheresoever civilized men live, in large or small groups, there is no need to form alliances for protection against one another. For the old style of politics that sought the advancement of one group at the expense of all others has largely been eliminated, and the machinery of government is used more for the regulation of society's economic affairs, in harmony with the spirit of the common brotherhood. And where the individual can better his economic condition by severing relation with one group to join another, there is not only no obstacles placed in his way, but every facility is extended him to do so.

This absolute security could never have been attained under the old system: for I remember reading in the history of the great war that at one period a prominent Englishman made the significant statement that "no peace to last for all time could possibly be expected—if we could arrange for a peace lasting four or five generations it would be satisfactory".

And he was right—he spoke the truth. For under a system that permitted the individual to bleed his fellow men—to exact, and legally collect, tribute for the use of resources which he had in no wise earned the right to control—it could not possibly lead to anything but strife, war and bloodshed.

He was right. In four or five generations the leaders, the exploiters, the captains of industry would again force their respective governments into a bloody war, in their squabbles about the markets—of course, all in order to keep the producers employed.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-r?

"Do we still pay interest on the bonded indebtedness incurred for the war?"

No, certainly not. Neither here, nor in Europe.

The inheritance tax took care of that. Upon the death of the holder of any of the bonds, society inherited his possessions and destroyed the bonds. This was one reason why the system was so early adopted in Europe.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-rr.

Excuse me a moment, please. Mother says, Cousin Jack, in California, is on the telephone. You may watch me, but, I warn you, it will do you no good to listen, for we shall not speak a word.

(A few minutes later.) You see, Cousin Jack is a deaf-mute, but we were always chums and I know the sign language as well as he does.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-rr?

Oh, certainly! I never could understand how you, in the gold-age, could possibly enjoy or get any real satisfaction out of a telephone conversation, when you were unable to see the person you conversed with. To me, it would seem like speaking to a stone wall.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-rr?

Yes, our modern telephone is really a tele-kinetographic phone—while one speaks, every motion, every gesture, every look that takes place at the other end is depicted just as it occurs.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-rr?

Oh, no! No wires. Not for the long distance. Yes, the local transmission is by wire. Let me explain.

Jack, phoning from his abode in Los Angeles, upon getting central, requested Chicago. Instantly, wireless connection was made with Chicago, when he gave the number desired, making the connection complete—the conversation then proceeded by wire at the two ends, spanning the gap by wireless.

Jack is a goldsmith by occupation and informed me that he had gone to work in Los Angeles to complete

the two hundred and twelve hours which he had remaining of this year's allotment when he left Chicago, as shown by his transfer card.

He is already in love with the climate of the land of the orange, and he is certainly looking fine.

At his request, I gave him a written introduction to a family whose society it was my pleasure to enjoy during my last visit in Los Angeles.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-rr?

Most assuredly!

I wrote it with the electric scribe—the same one mother used when she signed our lunch order.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-rr?

Oh, yes! A great many transactions are arranged in just this manner, which accounts for our very limited mail. In fact, I think, our mail is more in the nature of what you called "parcel post", or, possibly, "express".

For instance, if my watch should get out of order, I would send it to the factory where it was made, in Rockford, Illinois—by tube to the service-station, trunk-tube to the central tube-station, thence by aeroplane to the Rockford tube-central, to be immediately transmitted by tube to the repair department of the watch factory.

The through mail between New York and San Francisco, stopping at the principal intermediate points, requires from twelve to fifteen hours, depending upon weather conditions.

But you just again, called my attention to the word "business".

We very seldom use that word any more. The word "business" is almost obsolete—and the word "service" has acquired a new meaning.

From my reading of old-time literature, apart from the dictionary definition, I gather that "business" meant adeptness in turning the service of others to individual profit. "Service", on the contrary, means not to take individual gain without rendering individual compensation.

"Business" stood for profit and loss—"Service" stands for equal gains and no loss.

"Business" stood for exploiter and exploitee—"Service" stands for co-operation.

Please do not misunderstand my motive in explaining this at such great length. For, while I take a natural pride in our modern system, I am not actuated by any desire to "rub it in", but merely to be of service in making your visit profitable.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-r!

Did you hear that clarion sound? Let me look outside.

Yes, it is one of my friends, Mr. Swiftbird, coming down in his aeroplane to take me for a soar over the country districts.

Here he is in front of the house—just leave your bones wherever convenient (we have no dogs) and

accompany us in spirit, perch on the wings or anywhere you like.

Now, as we ascend above the tree-tops and house-tops, observe the clean, shaded, well spaced aggregation of homes that constitutes our modern city of Chicago. But for the house-tops, you might think you were looking down on the old Lincoln Park—for we have extended the park to cover the whole city and then built our homes throughout the park.

Back of us, a short distance, is your old friend, Lake Michigan; on our left, in the river district, you can see the large, massive buildings which form our service section.

That, I think, bears a more familiar stamp than anything you have seen; but there are no skyscrapers.

We are firm believers in "moderation in all things". And so long as there is a desert waste and long stretches of country where desolation reigns, what need be there to place the buildings on end? Could there ever be anything of such real worth at the center that it merits trampling one another underfoot to reach?

Notice how clear is the atmosphere all over the city; no dust, no pall of smoke, not even over the service section.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-rr?

Why, simply because our motive power is electricity.

That accounts for the absence of smoke, and the absence of dust is due to the well kept streets and the

fact that new sections of the city grow block by block—or, rather, four blocks at the time with a service-station in the center—and all vacant spaces are kept in lawn.

No one would think of building an isolated house, where he could not have the conveniences afforded by the co-operative service-station, any more than, I imagine, any of you, in your time, would have cared to live in a house with no sewer connection.

Our modern co-operative settlement plan affords us all the conveniences that you embodied in your hotel and large apartment-house arrangement—of course, with the new improvements added—without depriving us of the individual home, with its lawn, flowers and generous abundance of fresh air.

Real estate values are very stable and there is hardly a chance for speculation—this, I realize, is very dispiriting.

Of course, I do not mean to say that values are the same all over the city, for they are naturally higher in the service section. But even in the residence section they differ according to the desirableness of the location—whether that desirability consists in physical features, as proximity to Lake Michigan, or social, as represented by a more intelligent and refined class of neighbors. (For this is the only class distinction we have, the superiority of natural and developed intelligence.)

Look out over the country now. In the distance, to the south, you see the big canal; one of the connecting links between the lake and the river systems. Notice the railway lines, radiating in every direction—different lines, but all of the same system. For all the railways in the country are under one management; one corporation, capitalized at the physical value of the equipment, and under the immediate directorate of the Department of Transportation.

The management guards the interest of the railway corporation; the Department of Transportation represents and guards the interest of the people, the nation, society as a whole. Both work together harmoniously for equitable and fair adjustment, for improvement and new construction, for the rendering of the best possible service at the least possible cost.

For, as our economic system is based and the labor apportioned, we all know that no advantage can be taken—nor should it be given—by any branch of industry, without disarranging and necessitating readjustments along the whole line in every other branch of industry.

A large proportion of the stock is held by the people who are now or were formerly engaged in railroading in one capacity or another. There is hardly a trainman or a track-man of any length of service who does not hold some stock.

And this is the method by which the fruit of the labor accomplished, and not needed for immediate use,

may be stored away, at interest, for future use. And while thus stored, the owner may rest assured there will be no fluctuation in value through manipulation of the stock, nor through reckless, "frenzied-finance" management.

Now, as you look out over the country, you notice little clusters of houses, very evenly placed.

Those are the agricultural hamlets. They correspond to our settlement arrangement in the cities.

Nine sections of land are under one management—the manager is selected by the stockholders, and is, as a rule, a graduate from the agricultural department of our state university—and the hamlet is situated about the center of the middle section.

This terrain is all tributary to Rock River—which you can now see before you, winding through the country to its confluence with the Mississippi—and the raw material produced goes to the nearest shipping point on that stream. The moment it reaches water, it is in the natural channel for conversion into the finished product and for shipment to any section of the country or any part of the world.

But let us descend and visit one of these co-operative farms.

See, by steering a little to the right, grazing the branches of the trees, we shall alight in the middle of the community, right on the big lawn.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-rr?

No, this is not a summer resort, it is just a modern farm settlement.

In your time, much was said and written about the dreadful isolation of farm-life—its lack of the social amenities, its stunting of intellectual development, and the everlasting grind and toil which was the lot of the farming men and women of your period—and the earnest seeking for some remedy to counteract the ever increasing desire of the youths of both sexes to leave the agricultural regions with its plodding, toilsome occupation for the more tantalizing life in the cities.

We have solved the problem. For the men and women who live in these beautiful bungalows have all the comforts, all the conveniences and all the facilities—including leisure to enjoy them—that we possess in the cities.

Here we have the same improved telephone, which enables them to arrange and complete transactions, instantaneously, in any part of the country. Here we find the co-operative community service-station, connected by tube with every home, giving the country people the same modern conveniences, the same facilities for social intercourse and practically the same grade of entertainments and amusements as are enjoyed by the city dwellers.

The occupants of these bungalows are our modern farmers, co-operating to cultivate the nine sections of land, with the best obtainable modern agricultural ma-

chinery and along the most economical scientific lines.

Every nine-section group forms an individual corporation, divided into a certain number of shares, under the immediate supervision of the Department of Agriculture.

This does not mean that the Department of Agriculture interferes in the management and operation of the individual farm settlement. But rather that the Agricultural Department is the head of a co-operative movement of all the different farm settlements for the advancement of such measures, improvements and regulations as will promote the welfare of the farming industry in harmony with all other branches of industry. For, in common with all the other departments, the Agricultural Department reports to the Supreme Economic Council.

The time of labor allotted to each adult is the same as in all other industries—one thousand and forty hours per annum.

The manager hires all labor, and as one may labor without being a stockholder, so, also, may one be a stockholder without being obliged to sell his labor. But as in all other industries, the tendency is to invest the surplus earnings in the corporation that furnishes the employment, thereby acquiring a preference, and also gaining a voice, proportionate with the interest held, in the selection of the management.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-rr.

What's that? "The individual is only a cog in one of the wheels of our economic machine and may be instantly replaced when broken or worn out, while the machine grinds on. There is no chance for the individual to become independent of his fellows."

That, I think, has been true in all ages, with this difference that in former times the strain on the individual cogs was disproportionately unequal—resulting in the rapid deterioration and replacement of the useful cogs, while the others idled along, keeping their shape beautifully. The history of man is nothing but chapter after chapter of dependence and interdependence upon one another. And the suffering, strife and disorder which marks human progress from time immemorial are the natural results of abortive attempts to gain independence and undue advantages at the expense of one another—the failure to understand that human happiness, peace and welfare rests upon intelligent co-ordination of service to one another.

In your days, the prevalent notion seemed to be that the obtainance of the medium of exchange and the acquisition of property and resources, by any means whatsoever, even by gift or speculation, constituted the essential ingredients of a successful life.

We count a life successful in the degree that one does something which not only benefits himself but in a larger measure contributes to the common good—so that when death finally intervenes we all feel a distinct and personal loss.

One may advance by rendering service of superior efficiency and value. One may, also, continue to labor, invest and reinvest his earnings and income until he acquires all the stock of any one corporation, should his ambition lie in that direction. That would, for the time being, exclude others from participating in the ownership of that particular property, but at death the monopoly would be broken up and the stock again made accessible to whosoever had earned the means to buy it.

Such buying by a large number of individuals would have a tendency, under the competitive mode of bidding, to increase the price of the stock, while the dividends remained the same—giving a larger income for governmental expenses, while diminishing the proportionate rate of interest on the amount invested—and would, obviously, be self-regulatory.

As a general rule, the average couple make up their minds as to the amount they wish to accumulate.

Between the ages of twenty and forty-five, when the vitality is at its maximum, our modern men and women provide for the future. About the latter age, or shortly after, they have reached the philosophical stage of their career and begin to consider any further accumulation as foolish. And having learned, by that time, to enjoy life sensibly, future earnings, in addition to the income from their investments, go more and more into enjoyments and luxuries.

By this time, too, the children are beginning to take care of themselves and everything combines to lure them to indulge in a series of second honeymoon trips. And from now on to the age of sixty and sixty-five is the period when they extract the greatest amount of enjoyment and pleasure out of life—when they reap the greatest reward for having lived and planned wisely.

After the age of sixty, and especially after sixty-five, comes a time of more or less indifference to what the world has to offer and when one's greatest longings are for ease, solid comfort and a quiet life. One has seen something of the world, one has fought the battle of life—this is the evening; it is well—the small pension and the income from the preserved surplus earnings of one's prime will suffice.

Of course, there are men whose traits of character are not amenable to co-operation; who would rather be "the first man on the Alps, than the second man in Rome"; who chafe under our organized system, which does not give them full liberty for exploitation and speculation. These generally go out in remote sections, where matters are not so well organized, and become, in a way, pioneers: and as such render useful service, while in turn deriving benefit by having our abundance of commodities to draw upon, at very moderate prices.

Some of these, of more adventurous spirit, go into foreign lands, especially to Africa, South America and Asia.

In those parts of the last named continent where the gold standard has come into use and where the natives are being exploited to the utmost by their leaders or, as they call themselves, captains of industry (I call them captains of piracy), they enter into good soil and find great scope for their talents. There, history is repeating itself: building up an economic structure upon a false, unnatural foundation, until, eventually, it will topple to destruction, as it did here, and a new structure, based upon sound principles, will be erected.

And so, even there, they are doing useful work—without being cognizant of its real significance—by overdoing matters, and in this manner hastening the time when those people, too, shall awaken to a realization of their true interest.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-rr?

That's right! When I wander too far afield, just call me back to the subject.

You mean, "how does the co-operative farming communities market their products?"

As in all other branches of industry, we specialize—not, as a rule, on one line, but generally on two or three staples; however, without neglecting the by-products.

Truck-farming is carried on, almost exclusively, adjacent to the cities.

During the gold-age, many acres in the vicinity of the cities, and even in other localities, were used alto-

gether for floriculture. But that is all changed—for we do not traffic in flowers, any more than we do in kisses.

Flowers we have everywhere, but it would seem a profanation to buy and sell them.

In this district where the products are mostly corn, cattle, swine and dairy-produce, nearly everything goes down the river to mills, slaughter and packing houses, butter and cheese factories, which are all operated on the same co-operative plan and under the immediate supervision of the Department of Manufacture.

In most localities, and even here, such produce as is brought to its finished state on the farm is sold direct to the big co-operative magazines in the cities—which are all under the immediate control of the Department of Interchange, or what you would have called Department of Commerce.

Thus the co-operative farming communities dispose of their produce either direct to the co-operative magazines in the cities, which in turn sell to the co-operative service-stations, in the kitchens of which most of the food is prepared, ready to be served. Or it is sold to the co-operative mills, canning and packing houses, which, after converting the raw materials into their respective finished products, dispose of it to the co-operative magazines in all parts of the country, or ship it to foreign markets through the Department of Foreign Trade.

In any case, cash transactions are the invariable rule; and even between individuals, a debt must be

protested within forty-eight hours, or the claim loses validity in the event of death—i. e., cannot be paid out of the deceased's estate.

This is where the federal banking system functions as a vehicle for the interchange of goods and commodities.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-rr!

Oh, you think, because there is no chance to corner the market on credit, or to speculate with other people's money, by paying a small option or margin, the tendency must be to let the farmers hold the food-stuff until the pantries are empty.

But, in practice, it does not work out quite along that line.

For there are many service-magazines all over the country, each with a large number of service-stations, to be daily provided with the necessities of life. And in order to fill this daily demand they (the service-magazines) must carry some stock; and it is imperatively essential for the management of each to provide before-hand, or some will suffer by delayed shipments and the inability to fill numerous urgent orders. The co-operative mills, curing, canning and packing houses, the butter and cheese-making establishments must, in addition to being prepared to fill the regular orders of the service-magazines and provide for the foreign markets, carry sufficient stock, or arrange for future deliveries, to insure the steady operation of their plants.

And thus we find that the foodstuff is carried fairly well apportioned between the different parties interested, with perhaps the heaviest part held, awaiting the market, by the producer.

And that is as it should be, for the producers of other products and commodities are also the heaviest holders of the same—it is the result of their labor which they are holding while offering it to the world in exchange for other commodities, the results of the labor of others, which are similarly held and offered.

Grandpa often told me of how the farmers “in the good old time”—yes, that must have been in your days—worked almost day and night in the harvest season, sometimes with broken-down machinery and insufficient help. Then rushed the product to the market, selling it for whatever it would fetch, in order to obtain money to pay taxes, the interest on his mortgage and to meet obligations which he had incurred because of undertaking an enterprise for which he had too limited means, gambling on the outcome.

And after continuing the struggle for a number of years, wearing himself out and getting old in the process, a short crop would generally put him out of “business” to the “profit” of the holder of the mortgage.

And the crops he had rushed to the market and sold at the lowest price did not reach the consumer at that price—that would have been a sin. There was another class which must not be deprived of the means of earning an “honest” livelihood, by rendering the

very "useful" service of gambling on the outcome whether or not the consumer, during any given month, would be obliged to pay a certain price for his victuals.

Of course, they could not all win—nor could the same ones always win—and so, when one lost the gold "put up" to back his opinion, he generally rendered the world one supreme service by voluntarily joining the great majority in the bone-yard. I noticed before we left the house that one of you had a hole through the skull, and I wondered whether it was a pledge of heroism won in the great war, or—but I am getting personal, please excuse me.

Now, if you had brought your bones—and had some animated flesh upon them—we could have enjoyed some refreshment in the service-station. And you would have realized that in spite of having more than doubled the population of the country since "the good old time" there is no longer any cause to worry about "the high cost of living".

Perhaps you have already observed that while we have much leisure there is no enforced idleness. It is true that the apportionment per adult of one thousand and forty hours of labor does not mean that he is thereby provided with that number of hours of labor, for it is incumbent upon him to find the employment. But so long as there is no over-production, there is employment for every man somewhere; and it is for the individual man to find where that "somewhere" is. Society, having made the basic conditions

impartially just, must leave to the individual the arrangement of his private affairs—and it is the individual's private affair to provide for himself and for those depending upon him.

Many a young man shifts about from one industry to another, until he finds the one for which he is best suited. Should he decide upon farming, for instance, and having found the particular place where life seems most congenial, he may invest his surplus in the stock of that particular co-operative farm, as opportunity offers. He need not wait until he has saved up a comparatively large sum of money and then calculate all the contingencies, as you did in your time—will there be enough to swing the enterprise; make the first payment, buy some second-hand implements and machinery, some old horses and ditto furniture; will the balance suffice, not to live but to exist upon, until his labor brings him returns?

But those days are past. He may invest his surplus as he goes and not be unduly worried about the outcome. For the concern is already in full operation under competent management: and if he has the ability to manage, management will be given him by his co-workers, in due course of time. Should there be a surplus of labor in that particular locality, being a stockholder gives him the preference—other things being equal, for the manager has a free hand in choosing the necessary assistance. And if he wish to change his investment to another farm, or another line of industry, he may sell his stock—subject to a very nomi-

nal stamp-tax, by leaving the money on deposit until the transaction has been completed.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-rr.

Oh, you do.

You miss the farmer "who was pointed to, with pride, in your time as an example of sturdy independence, working a small tract of land with the aid of one or two men".

From what I have been able to glean, listening to grandpa and through the study of old-time literature, there never lived an independent farmer, but his independence had been earned by former generations and handed him as a handicap to the detriment of his fellows, or gained by years of toil, against heavy odds, which in most cases unfitted him for the enjoyment of the fruit of his labor. And the existence of the former made conditions so much more difficult for the latter, necessitating endless toil before he was able to attain the goal of his ambition.

What inducement, then, did your "good old-time" system hold out to those who performed the actual labor, the hired men, to achieve "sturdy independence"?

None of our modern farmers would wish to exchange our well organized settlement mode of living for your old-time, isolated farm life. The young men, just beginning life's journey, would certainly not change places with the hired men of your period. Those who have acquired a competence, have done so under congenial conditions; and now, when there is

no longer any necessity for them to labor, should they so elect, are better situated than the independent farmer of former days. For the fruit of their labor, which they have set aside for the future, is stored in such a manner that it need cause them no anxiety, but leaves them free to enjoy it.

The only ones who may find cause for dissatisfaction are those who are still able to trace the line of their ancestry back to the possessor of some large tract of land which, under the old system of inheritance, would have come into their possession without the necessity of having to render any service in return. But such a grievance would be wholly imaginary, and is no more worthy of consideration than, I imagine, would be the plaint of some man in your time harkening back to the affluent days of some slave-holding ancestor.

Now if we had more time, I could show you the long lines of stall-fed cows in the well appointed barn. The milking is just going on with the latest improved apparatus; and about the farm, utilized for different purposes, are many labor-saving devices, which would excite your wonder and curiosity. But the evening shadows will soon be falling; so come, let us return to your bones before the sprites of twilight discover their absence from the bone-yard.

My friend already has the motor humming, so take your former seats, on the wings or wherever you choose.

Look down and observe how large the fields are. Everything is arranged and organized for production on a large scale. The small farmer of your days would have to work long hours, even longer than he did then, if he would compete with our modern, systematized farming operations.

And the same holds good in every line of industry.

We have simply utilized, and still further developed, the methods inaugurated and employed to such great selfish advantage by the trusts and monopolies of the gold-age. Only, we have completely reversed the use of the advantages gained by this methodical mode of operation. In place of a few exploiting the many for their own gain, the many have eliminated the few by co-operation—and by removing that monopoly creating class-builder inheritance. And in place of one organization fighting another by cut-throat competition for individual profit, all our organizations work harmoniously together, under centralized supervision, for mutual benefit.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-rr.

Oh, you think, since we do not permit a person to transmit his estate to his children, "it would be just as well to let the government permanently retain ownership of all resources and utilities, parceling them out on lease for just sufficient to defray governmental expenses". Or, in view of the fact that there are but poor opportunities for speculation and large profits, "let the government administer and directly operate

all resources and utilities, thus doing away with the necessity of earning, and paying, interest on the capitalization of the nation's wealth."

Any such arrangement would not meet all the requirements of civilized man. For man in his advanced state of civilization craves not only the facilities to cater to his immediate wants, but, in order to live content, must have some means of gratifying his impulse to provide for the future—some method that enables him to store away, in a satisfactory manner, the surplus fruit of his labor.

It is true that labor must pay tribute in order to maintain the dividend rate on the stock, but in doing so it indirectly helps to maintain the government, by reimbursing the stockholders for having advanced funds for its maintenance. This method also serves as an incentive to thrift and the fostering of the individual initiative and resourcefulness, and, since its advantages are equally available to all, works hardship on no one.

The immense manufacturing plants of Chicago, which are just beginning to be discernible in the distance, are largely owned by the men who perform the labor in one capacity or another, or have formerly done so,

In the gold-age, I have read with great amusement, labor was advised to take care of its earnings, to strive for independence, to put something aside "for a rainy day"; and long articles, and even books, were

written, deploring the prevailing tendency of the laboring class to live from "hand to mouth".

But, so far as I have been able to learn, nothing was done to change the conditions which made it practically impossible for the worker to invest his earnings in that branch of industry to which he gave his time, his thoughts, his labor. He was advised to invest in a home—to speculate in residence lots, at an inflated valuation—and that was virtually the only avenue open to him, considering his lack of opportunities to become proficient in the financial game and the comparatively limited means that came to him as his share of production.

His forefather, in the days before the advent of the trusts and large combinations and the subdivision of labor in the production of any given commodity, had been the complete master of his craft. It was not an altogether hopeless endeavor, should ambition move him, to essay an independent undertaking. But in your time, with your much-boasted perfect organization of production, you excluded the operator of the machinery of production from participating in the ownership, by making the conditions precarious.

You divided society into two camps—one to be maintained by labor, the other by capital. But since capital is only a tool for the better functioning of labor—which is continually being mended and renewed by labor—how could one class, and all its henchmen, possibly, be anything but parasites upon those who performed the labor.

True, there were individual capitalists of benevolent inclination who offered special inducements to labor to share in the profits and assume responsibility in the management. But these were only sporadic attempts, which labor recognized as being wholly contingent upon the good will, or caprice, of that particular individual, and did not alter the general conditions by one iota.

You built a wall between labor and capital—as if capital could possibly, but for the hoarding of an over-voluminous medium of exchange, be apart from labor, which is continually producing and reproducing it.

You preached fair division between labor and capital; and then you set labor to dig more and more of the yellow metal from the bowels of the earth, and called it capital—making labor divide with these new, arbitrarily mobilized, forces of capital. And the more of this you made labor stack up, the more powerful became capital; the more you were able to juggle results and blind labor with its glitter and the more scant became the necessities of life which labor could buy with its portion.

And by means of this tool, handed down from generation to generation, the members of one class fastened themselves as parasites upon the others.

With this superabundance of the medium of exchange you controlled resources and equipments, and magnified their value. With this you gambled in food-stuffs, commodities and shares in the ownership of

resources and equipments, working the values up and down, forming "corners" and "squeezing" one another out of his share of the ownership; and then you deplored the unwillingness and "improvidence" of labor in not entering the game with its earnings.

Once, when a child, I asked grandpa why people formerly crowded together so much and built such enormously large cities—"did they acquire more gold by doing so?"

Then grandpa explained to me how the crowding together increased real estate values, until they could point with pride to their main business streets, where the ground sold for many thousand dollars per front foot. How the business men who occupied the premises were obliged to pay a heavy monthly rent as interest upon the valuation, and how they, in turn, made the public pay tribute to the landlord class (not only indirectly for the amount assessed against those particular premises, but, in the more circuitous way, for rents collected in other localities and already added to the selling price of the goods and commodities) by spreading this interest upon the price of every service or commodity the people were in need of.

He said, "big signs were erected, urging the people to 'boost their city' and, if possible, to double its size within a certain number of years."

"But", said I, "grandpa, the people would be drawn from some other city, and what difference did it make

whether they paid tribute in Blunderville or Bungletown. Were they happier in a larger city?"

"No", he said, "they were more miserable. There, the ground values were so high that they could not hope to build their own homes, but a large number of families had to share the same building. But they came in order to obtain employment, for the same class that collected toll as landlords controlled the means of production and furnished employment—that was the system."

Real estate was bought and held, not because the buyer had any special use for it, but with a view to speculation. And when the expected advance in value did not materialize rapidly enough, the holders would band together and offer large bonuses to manufacturing plants in other cities, that were seeking new locations, to induce them to locate in this particular community—not for the reason that they might thereby be able to serve the people better, but in order to give the holders of real estate the occasion to exact a heavy tribute from the large influx of new producers.

But now we are soaring over the service section of Chicago. Directly beneath us is the railway station—what you would have called a union depot—, where centers all the lines entering Chicago and where rail and water transportation meet.

Yonder, beyond the river, is the city administration building—or what you called the city hall—where the city council, a purely legislative and advisory body,

has its sessions. There, too, are the offices of the different departments, which are all controlled by the city manager, who holds the only elective office in the executive branch of the city government. Adjoining it, to the right, is the federal building, with offices representing every department of the federal supervisory service.

Here, grouped about and provided with shipping facilities by rail and water, we have the big co-operative magazines, each carrying its special line of commodities, ready for direct sale, or distribution to the service-stations. Stretching away on both sides of the two branches of the river, you see the large modern factories, equally well provided with shipping facilities by rail and water.

Now we are swinging back over the south branch of the river, and this big white building is a piano factory, where my friend, Mr. Swiftbird, holds a position as bookkeeper.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-r?

Yes, certainly, he is part owner. He invests, little by little as occasion offers, some of his surplus earnings in the stock.

We have now circled about and are approaching the north branch of the river. That large cream-colored building is the agricultural tractor plant where I started to work at the age of twenty, upon the completion of my technical, manual and military training.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-rr.

Oh yes, "military"! Only, it is more athletic than military. The training is given every male as part of the curriculum, but I will tell you of that later.

I am already part owner in the tractor plant, but I am thinking seriously of selling the stock, or most of it, in order to buy a share in one of the outlying settlements and build a home. I shall not have sufficient for the undertaking, but the bank will lend me the balance.

You see, we have done away with the old tribute and profit-squeezing system and have arranged the economic conditions in such a manner that the man who renders service receives the reward, without having to surrender any part of it to any vested interest, or to pay an inflated price for his necessities because someone is making a living by speculation. And the consequence is that all are anxious to render service, for there is absolutely no other way to gain a livelihood. For the same conditions prevail throughout the land.

But here we are at home. Just flutter in and be sure you do not claim one another's bones, for we have but very few lawyers.

The judiciary machinery has been very much reduced, as has the police force: in fact, we have no police force as you understand that term. The force extant serves more in the nature of doing watch duty—for the regulation of traffic and the rendering of information and assistance in the service section. In

the residence section the man who has charge of the service-station is ex-officio peace officer, and it is the duty of every citizen to assist him.

We have only one penal institution in the whole country, and capital punishment has been abolished.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-r!

What's that?

"The country overrun with criminals!"

Our economic system does not make criminals, quite the contrary, it has a tendency to bring out and develop the best in every man and woman. Moreover, we do not permit the manufacture and sale of physical and moral poison in the form of high percentage alcoholic drinks. We have no slums or tenement districts or other suitable places for criminals to breed and develop in. Why, we have not even any of your large apartment-houses or hotels, except the service hotel in the vicinity of the railway station—but who would wish to live in the service section? Hotel accommodation may be obtained at any service-station, but these places are so surcharged with the predominant clean family life which environs and maintains them that they are extremely poor soil for the fostering of vicious tendencies.

In your generation you learned to change fever and disease-breeding swamps into sanitary and productive areas, but it remained for subsequent generations to change the vice and crime-breeding cities of

former days into beautiful and good-fellowship inspiring areas of habitation.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-r?

Oh, yes! Occasionally, crimes are committed. Humanity, I presume, never will be infallible.

In the case of manslaughter, when the guilty person evinces due repentance, he is compelled to make amends, so far as it is possible to do so through his labor, to the relatives and dependents of the victim.

If the murder is wilful, deliberate and premeditated—because of revenge, jealousy, robbery, or similar motives—we do what the Bible tells us God did to the first murderer: we brand him, so that all may see and recognize him in his true color.

If he is a degenerate, he is branded and confined.

Those found guilty of malfeasance in office, who have, for their own financial gain, abused the trust placed in them, are put out of office, stripped of their gain, if that is possible, and given a special brand which renders them unfit for anything but the coarsest labor.

It is true that while the death penalty has been abolished, some of these branded men deliberately choose death, self-inflicted, in preference to the shame, distrust and contempt which naturally becomes their portion. But that is their privilege—since they have abused the trust placed in them by free men, where they had equal opportunities with the rest, they must not, by sufferance, parade as honest men among honest men.

These are extreme examples, for probation is extended in the case of minor delinquencies: but notwithstanding that, even these cannot escape the cloud on their record, for their registration cards show the mark which society has placed against them.

A few days ago, in the public library, I read a copy of an old newspaper, printed nearly a hundred years ago. (By the way, you would find our present-day newspaper dull reading, for we have very little of sensational murder cases and not any spicy "smart set" divorce cases—since we have dispensed with that gold-age luxury, high society.) It seems, according to the old newspaper, a campaign was on to abolish a certain industry as being inimical to public welfare. And the main plea of the opposition was that such a course would deprive a large army of men of their employment, who would then crowd onto the already over-filled avenues of other occupations.

And, so far as I can judge, the plea of the opposition contained a large measure of justice. For since the other occupations were already over-crowded and there was no systematic regulation and control of industry as a whole, it would require considerable time and cause widespread suffering before matters could adjust themselves satisfactorily.

Some of you that are present probably were interested in that campaign, possibly on the opposition side.

What do you think when I tell you that we have no enforced idleness although we have not only com-

pletely abolished that industry, but to the men closed out of that occupation are added a large number of policemen, lawyers, judges, jailers, stockbrokers, board of trade operators, bankers, real estate men, and all their auxiliaries; to which may be supplemented the numerous small tradesmen with their assistants, who carried on a precarious business under your effort-wasting system.

There can be no gainsaying that most of these, under your system, rendered useful service. But having changed the system, they, with the descendants of the capitalist and landlord class, became a valuable adjunct to the producers—making possible the great reduction in the necessary work-hours, aside from removing the heavy load which the producer formerly carried.

I forgot to tell you that the manager of the shoe factory, a few days ago, offered father a better position, with higher pay: but father has declined. Father has obtained a patent on an invention that he has been working on for several years.

Having incorporated, ten per cent of the total number of shares will be issued to him, pro rata, as the balance is sold. Of course, the stock will be offered, and sold, through the usual channel, the local branch of the federal service. However, the proceeds, in this instance, do not remain with the government, but are turned over to the management of the new corporation, to be used in establishing the new service.

Obviously, the general public is not conversant with the practical value of the new invention: that remains yet to be demonstrated. But many of father's friends have confidence in it and have bought some of the stock. And so, father is going to look for a location—probably in the Terminal Building, where the desired space, with power, may be rented—and begin manufacturing, on a small scale. When the public learns of the practical value of the new invention, the stock will naturally sell and the increased bidding will advance the price.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-r?

No. It was not obligatory to incorporate. He could have started in a limited way by himself and if the manufactured article proved of exceptional superior worth, obtained a high price and outsold all competition, since his patent protected him against infringement. (For while we no longer try to outdo one another by working longer hours or for less pay, we still have the competition of efficiency—the rivalry to excel one another in the superior merit of the work accomplished, and by means of that obtain the greater reward.) But at his death, the concern would be incorporated and the shares offered to the public in small lots and sold to the highest bidder.

Father has ten years more before he will be entitled to draw pension; and I do not think he will begin to draw it then, unless he is incapacitated for work.

Of course, drawing a pension would disqualify him from receiving an adult's quota of work-hours.

Brrr-rrr-rrr-rr-rr.

Oh, "the schooling and training of the youths".

That reminds me of an argument I once enjoyed listening to between father and grandpa.

Grandpa told of two twin brothers brought to this country at the tender age of ten. They were as much alike, in every way, as some of the gold-coins in the local museum. But upon landing, their ways parted and they did not meet again for fourteen years.

In the meantime, to one, the oldest, had been extended the best facilities for acquiring an education: being moved from school to school as he progressed and finally finished with a course in one of our best universities.

The other gained his schooling as best he could—common school and not over-much of that. At the age of fourteen he obtained employment in a machine shop and, being faithful and industrious, was encouraged to learn the trade; with the result that at twenty-four he was one of the most skilful workmen in the shop.

Then the meeting took place. Grandpa said, the elder appeared a polished gentleman, with every graceful accomplishment at the tips of his fingers—being able to discourse learnedly and interestingly upon most every subject imaginable.

The younger appeared a common workman, rather awkward; he could talk "shop", but had only a hazy,

smattering knowledge of things in general, most of which had been gained by cursory newspaper reading.

Grandpa insisted, one was educated, the other merely trained.

Father said, they were both educated, or both trained; and that one was as ignorant as the other, should they change places. In fact, he believed the younger was at the moment the better equipped, for he was already rendering service, he had specialized and turned his knowledge to account.

The other, he said, had been stuffed full with other men's thoughts and it still remained for him to adjust himself in some specific line of service—it still remained to be seen whether he was able to think thoughts of his own and bring them forth in deeds, however humble.

Notwithstanding that, he acknowledged, it was an excellent foundation to build upon.

Our educational system is planned with a view to the simultaneous training of the mind and the hand; and with the object of developing a healthy, vigorous body, as well as a healthy and vigorous mind. We do not only aim to instill in the young minds the knowledge acquired and recorded by former generations, but by every means and facility we seek to encourage and develop latent talents.

As the scholar advances, he is encouraged to specialize in those subjects in which he has shown the greatest aptitude: knowing that when he later recog-

nizes his deficiency in some subject which he needs a better knowledge of in order to progress in his chosen work he will take up and study that subject to better advantage. For we aim to study so long as we live: and for that reason we do not wish, at any time, to make the acquisition of knowledge a task, but to dispense it in such a way that study becomes a craving and a pleasure.

As the boys grow older, the athletic, or military, training is made more strenuous, and team-work is practiced to the fullest extent.

At the age of sixteen they are given an apportionment of two hundred work-hours, which is increased year by year until, upon becoming of age, they receive the full adult quota. From the time they begin to receive work-hour allotments the manual and technical training is intensified, permitting them to acquire a thorough knowledge of their chosen work.

The education of the girls is radically different.

Since, in the carrying on of the world's work throughout the ages from generation to generation, man is essentially the provider, the maintainer, the defender; woman is the home-maker, the beautifier, the comforter. So have we planned the education of the boys along practical lines, to fit them for life's duty; so have we planned the education of the girls along esthetic lines, to fit them for life's duty.

The woman of our era is pre-eminently the acquirer of general knowledge—she delves into history to its

remotest period, she studies languages, music and art, she is well versed in all scientific topics. She is not so much a specialist, except in isolated instances—it is for man to specialize—, but she is the incarnation of everything that is inspiring, lofty and beautiful; and thus she unconsciously molds and influences man to strive to attain, and maintain, a high standard.

Woman, throughout the ages, has been held in subjection—her destiny was shaped and controlled to serve the dominating arrangement of man; she was not a free agent. The crude and rude mode of life compelled her to adapt herself as subordinate to man's whims and fancies, with the result that she became either a petted doll to cajole the favor of her lord and master, or the irrational petty tyrant of the domestic hearth. But through it all, in spite of the hampering conditions and the inability to foster and give free, effectual, expression to the mankind redeeming qualities which nature has endowed her with, there still persisted the innate craving for the beautiful, the finer sensibility, the spiritual, poetic longing for something above the material things which man's grosser nature could only vaguely divine.

The woman of your age strove for freedom, to clear herself from the trammels and toils that custom and tradition had fastened upon her. But in doing so she thought the way to freedom was to usurp the status of man. She longed for an independent career, such as man carved out for himself; she aped man in mode of dress, in manners, speech and vices; she

strove to be what nature had not ordained her for; she lacked poise: she failed to discern that a career, in the majority of cases, is merely the means for gaining a livelihood—and that is man's duty to provide—and that her own mission in life is distinct and lies entirely apart from that of man, and is in every way as worthy, if not worthier, for all of man's efforts are subservient to that end.

Our churches, too, are different from those of your days.

You will find no odor of sulphur about them; and there is an entire absence of the old-time religious fervor, and more of the deep, calm, spiritual earnestness which Christ manifested in all his ministrations.

We do not concern ourselves so much about the next life, but more about the duties of this; resting content that if the Supreme Power, or God, which decreed that we should enter this life by means of the functioning of immutable laws of nature, has destined us for another life, we shall enter upon that life in conformity with some immutable law of nature which our belief, or disbelief, cannot alter, but which our character building, or lack of it, possibly, may. For while man has been able to faintly trace some of the physical laws that govern the cosmic organization, there may be psychic laws, equally immutable, equally inexorable, but of which our limited human intelligence can never hope to form but the vaguest conjectures.

And so we strive to do our duty as between man and man, between woman and woman and between man and woman, not with the hope of thereby earning heaven hereafter, but with the aim of having heaven here—and not worry about matters that are beyond us.

Our churches are potent factors in our social and intellectual life—they are beacon lights which point and guide the way to a nobler and better life.

I have no desire to hurt your feelings, but I cannot help remembering how during the great world war you and your enemies alike prayed to the same God to assist you, to grant you success, to give you victory, so that you could then, in peace, return to the same iniquitous conditions which had brought on the bloody carnage.

Brrr-rrr-rr-rr-r!

Oh, did I?

Well, I do not blame you for wishing to change the subject. But as to “her” I feel a little diffident, and would rather not have said anything, but the fact that you shall soon resume your “wooden overcoats” makes it less embarrassing.

She is the daughter of the president of our co-operative tractor plant. And the first time I saw her was a little more than a year ago when she, strolling through the machinery hall, stopped to view the cutting of the tool of the lathe which I was operating. Her father was with her and introduced us, which

gave me the opportunity to explain the working of the machine, and incidentally, to observe the calm, frank intelligence that beamed from her eyes.

The next time I met her, we were both in bathing togs, on a beach in Southern California. There was a mutual feeling—she acknowledged her part later—of meeting an old friend.

There, during our sojourn, we became the best of comrades—nothing more; although we both felt that the future held a world of potentialities. We learned to know one another, to commune in frank, good fellowship, to enjoy one another's society, to confide in one another and discuss any subject without reservation. And never, even for an instant, did the sense of sex obtrude itself upon our fellowship or color our liking for one another, except in so far as each of us represented the opposite which throughout nature unconsciously seeks and finds harmony in conjunction with the other. (For sex is the common allurements of any woman—the meanest harpy, the most worthless, resorts to it as her most potently blinding charm—: why then, since I have man's superior intelligence, let my choice be influenced by that which every beast in the jungle grants its mate?)

And so we parted, without any deeper understanding, or further preparatory measure than that I should call on her when she, later, arrived in Chicago.

On the return trip, it seemed as if someone near and dear had gone out of my life; and yet a balm entered

my soul when the thought came that I was but hurrying towards the place where I would, again, see her.

And then the inevitable climax towards which we were both tending stood out in bold relief and I felt glad. But still I questioned myself: "Was this the 'one' woman who held my cup of happiness?" And not only that, but what was of more importance, the deciding test, and for which I calmly searched my soul of all its memories of her: "Did she possess those attributes which I would love to see reproduced in my children?"

As calmly my soul answered, unreservedly: "Yes, she is the 'one'"—and all the way back to Chicago, the cars clankingly re-echoed, "The One, The One, The One".

Some time later when I called on her at her father's abode, in Michigan Avenue, there was no real need for the spoken word, or query. For at the first glance we both intuitively knew that the other had passed through the same ordeal and arrived at the same conclusion; nor was there any feint at evasion on her part, she met me frankly, half way—it was her affair as much as mine.

The cave-man went out with a club, effectively subdued his rival, and grasping the object of his desire by the hair, pulled her, willy-nilly, into his lair.

The knight of old performed deeds of valor, to prove himself the best man in the field for his lady's heart and hand. Having won her, he immured her in

his moat-protected castle, for safe keeping, while he went about and proved by actual demonstrations that he had lost none of his prowess, but continued worthy to receive his lady's favor.

The man of the gold-age discarded the sword and other crude instruments and labored earnestly to rob his fellow men by legal methods—or peradventure his father had done it for him. And with the glittering tinsel and the hollow titles accompanying it, he charmed the maid of his choice, until his fancy was attracted by the fresher blush of a younger maid, when his tinsel served the double purpose of dazzling the new flame and allaying the ire of the displaced one.

Or perchance his store of tinsel needed replenishment. Here was a chance truly worthy of his metal—to offer his love unalloyed in exchange for tinsel unalloyed.

But the modern man has only himself to offer—his heart, his head and his hands—and, behold, it suffices. For never, in all history, have men and women lived in closer and happier relation than in our days.

And so, we two shall soon start hand in hand down the path of life, unimpeded by the dead weight of her father's wealth, which can neither smile nor frown upon us. Joyously knowing that my labor and industry shall suffice to fill all our needs; and that if our union is blessed with children, they will enter a world based upon, and regulated by, just principles, where it is not a struggle and a hardship but a pleasure to live.

And now, before your departure, look and examine yourselves in yonder large mirror. See how dry and clean picked are your bones: the worms have indeed fattened upon you. What have you gained by your insatiable greed and your insistent maintenance of the unjust conditions?

The earth is large, there is room for all, and our labor can produce abundantly for all, if intelligently organized—and all you received in the end is what you now possess, your six feet of sod.

Please depart softly, for here comes The One, and I do not wish her to hear the hollow tramp of dead men's shoes.

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